Old Palace Nursery is an outstanding facility that offers:
- Stimulating indoor and outdoor areas for purposeful learning
- Specialist resources for ICT, gym, ballet, French, music, art and technology
- Enjoyable and challenging activities through structured learning and educational play

Old Palace Nursery aims to:
- Deliver all aspects of the Early Learning Goals within an enhanced programme of activities
- Meet the needs of the individual child
- Support the transition of each child to the next stage of learning
- Focus on the joy of learning, happiness, self-esteem and confidence

Old Palace Juniors invite you and your daughter to come and experience the dynamic range of opportunities to learn, within a close and caring community

The recent ISI inspection found outstanding elements with the Early Years Foundation stage at Old Palace in the following areas:
- Overall effectiveness of EYFS
- Quality of provision
- Outcomes for the children
- Pastoral care
nurture

SIXTH FORM
Branch out & flourish

Our Sixth Form offers a distinctively broad range of subject choices with opportunities to take up to 5.5 subjects at AS and A2 level.

All of our students are equipped to go to university. Those achieving top marks aim for Oxbridge whilst others explore courses at a variety of excellent universities.

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The happiness of the girls is one of our primary concerns – we are committed to our belief that learning within a happy environment secures the best results in every sphere.

Old Palace has a long history of academic success and we expect our students to strive and aspire to their highest achievements according to individual potential.

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Cabinet 2014
Michael Gove – Education Review 2014
Faith Schools Dominate Official Rankings
Sir Michael Wilshaw – Schools will Face Surprise Ofsted Visits
All 7 and 14 Year-Olds Must Take Exams - Sir Michael Wilshaw
2013 SATs Results Show Improvement
Top Performing & Improving Primary Schools 2014
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GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR MINISTERS

Cabinet Members
The Rt Hon David Cameron MP - Prime Minister, Minister for the Civil Service, First Lord of the Treasury
The Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP - Deputy Prime Minister and Lord President of the Council
The Rt Hon William Hague MP - First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
The Rt Hon George Osborne MP - Chancellor of the Exchequer
The Rt Hon Danny Alexander MP - Chief Secretary to the Treasury
The Rt Hon Theresa May MP - Secretary of State for the Home Department
The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP - Secretary of State for Defence
The Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP - Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and President of the Board of Trade
The Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP - Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP - Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice Unpaid
The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP - Secretary of State for Education
The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP - Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP - Secretary of State for Health
The Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP - Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
The Rt Hon Justine Greening MP - Secretary of State for International Development
The Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael MP - Secretary of State for Scotland
The Rt Hon Edward Davey MP - Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change
The Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP - Secretary of State for Transport
The Rt Hon Maria Miller MP - Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Minister for Women and Equalities
The Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP - Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

The Rt Hon David Jones MP - Secretary of State for Wales
The Rt Hon Lord Hill of Oareford CBE - Leader of the House of Lords and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

Also attends Cabinet
The Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP - Minister without Portfolio
The Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP - Leader of the House of Commons and Lord Privy Seal
The Rt Hon Sir George Young Bt MP - Chief Whip and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury
The Rt Hon Francis Maude MP - Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General
The Rt Hon Oliver Letwin MP - Minister for Government Policy
The Rt Hon David Laws MP - Minister of State for Cabinet Office, Minister of State for Schools
The Rt Hon Baroness Warsi - Senior Minister of State, Minister of State for Faith and Communities
The Rt Hon David Willetts MP - Minister of State for Universities and Science
The Rt Hon Dominic Grieve QC MP - Attorney General Attends Cabinet when Ministerial responsibilities are on the agenda
The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP - Minister of State for Cabinet Office (Cities and Constitution) Attends Cabinet when Ministerial responsibilities are on the agenda
The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP - Minister without Portfolio Unpaid

Ministers by department

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Oliver Heald QC MP - Solicitor General Northern Ireland Office
The Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP - Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
The Rt Hon Andrew Robathan MP - Minister of
State for Northern Ireland
Office of the Advocate General for Scotland
The Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC - HM Advocate General for Scotland
Office of the Leader of the House of Commons
The Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP - Leader of the House of Commons and Lord Privy Seal
The Rt Hon Tom Brake MP - Deputy Leader of the House of Commons Unpaid

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The Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael MP - Secretary of State for Scotland
The Rt Hon David Mundell MP - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland
The Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC - Spokesperson in the House of Lords

Wales Office
Swyddfa Cymru
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Stephen Crabb MP - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales Unpaid
Baroness Randerson - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales Unpaid

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Lord Livingston - Minister of State for Trade and Investment Unpaid
Matthew Hancock MP - Minister of State for Skills and Enterprise
Viscount Younger of Leckie - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Intellectual Property
Jo Swinson MP (on maternity leave) - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs
Jenny Willott MP - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs

Cabinet Office
The Rt Hon David Cameron MP - Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, Minister for the Civil Service
The Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP - Deputy Prime Minister and Lord President of the Council
The Rt Hon Francis Maude MP - Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General
The Rt Hon Oliver Letwin MP - Minister for Government Policy
The Rt Hon David Laws MP - Minister of State for Cabinet Office
The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP - Minister of State for Cabinet Office (Cities and Constitution)
Nick Hurd MP - Minister for Civil Society
Jo Johnson MP - Parliamentary Secretary Unpaid
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The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP - Minister without Portfolio
The Rt Hon John Hayes MP - Minister without Portfolio

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The Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP - Minister of State for Business and Energy
Lord Livingston - Minister of State for Trade and Investment Unpaid
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Jenny Willott MP - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs

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House of Lords

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Lord Newby OBE - Government Deputy Chief Whip and Captain of the Queen’s Bodyguard of the Yeomen of the Guard

Whips

House of Commons

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The Rt Hon Don Foster MP - Deputy Chief Whip, Comptroller of HM Household

The Rt Hon Desmond Swayne TD MP - Government Whip, Vice Chamberlain of HM Household

Greg Hands MP - Deputy Chief Whip, Treasurer of HM Household

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Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon - Government Whip, Lord in Waiting

Earl Attlee - Government Whip, Lord in Waiting

Lord Gardiner of Kimble - Government Whip, Lord in Waiting

The Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Saltaire - Government Whip, Lord in Waiting Unpaid

Baroness Northover - Spokesperson in the House of Lords Unpaid

Lord Bates - Government Whip, Lord in Waiting

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Sam Gyimah MP - Government Whip, Lord Commissioner of HM Treasury

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Mark Lancaster TD MP - Government Whip, Lord Commissioner of HM Treasury

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John Penrose MP - Government Whip, Lord Commissioner of HM Treasury

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Jenny Willott MP - Assistant Whip

Amber Rudd MP - Assistant Whip

Claire Perry MP - Assistant Whip

Gavin Barwell MP - Assistant Whip

Jo Johnson MP - Assistant Whip

Harriett Baldwin MP - Assistant Whip
Schools: Michael Gove forged on with his plan to return to the good old days, and called his critics the ‘enemies of promise’

2013 was the year when the education minister was compelled to resign. Unfortunately – from the viewpoint of many teachers in England – it was the Welsh education minister, Leighton Andrews, who left office after he carried a banner in support of a primary school in his constituency that faced closure because of his own policies. East of Offa’s Dyke, Michael Gove showed no sign of flagging, still less resigning.

In January, MPs warned he was “trying to do too much too quickly”. But though the education secretary gave a little ground to his critics, plans for a new regime at both A-level and GCSE, to start in 2015 with the first exams in 2017, stayed firmly in place. GCSE would have a new grading structure based on numbers rather than letters. There would also be fewer re-sits, fewer tiered papers for pupils of different abilities and no more “bite-sized modules”. In other words, traditional written exams, externally marked, were back, as though the past 50 years in English schools had never happened. One of Gove’s few concessions was to permit that school-based assessment would still be allowed, though “kept to a minimum”.

It was somehow characteristic of the English approach to school “reform” that the biggest remaining argument at the year’s end was what to call the new exams. Gove dropped the title English Baccalaureate Certificates – making EBC the shortest-lived acronym in education history – and said they would remain as GCSEs, presumably to signify that, though standards would be tougher, the exams would still be “inclusive” and not, as his original proposals suggested, exclude the bottom 40%. Wales, however, intended to keep the old-style GCSE, so that pupils in different parts of the UK would hold different qualifications with the same name.
In advance of the new-style GCSE, the exams regulator, Ofqual, clamped down on the “grade inflation” that it said was damaging public confidence. The numbers getting top grades in A-levels and GCSEs fell for the second year running. But in a new example of schools gaming the system, the number of pupils taking International GCSEs soared. Many teachers thought the IGCSE easier but, even if it wasn’t, taking both exams gave a child two chances of a high grade.

Gove also went ahead with Spag (spelling and grammar) tests for 11-year-olds. A strange proposal, announced by the deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg, that year 6 children should be placed in ability deciles (10% bands) to provide “clarity” for parents appeared to go nowhere.

Gove further advanced his ambitions to return schools to the good old days with a new national curriculum that emphasised rigour, knowledge and the three Rs. Again, he made small concessions: for example, Mary Seacole, the black woman who cared for Crimean War soldiers and who was initially dropped from the curriculum, was restored. But when a letter to two national newspapers, signed by 100 education academics, warned that his “endless lists of spellings, facts and rules” could “severely erode educational standards”, Gove called them “enemies of promise”.

Academies and free schools received less attention than in previous years, but continued to grow. Free school numbers doubled to 174 while 653 primary schools, 207 secondaries, four all-through schools and 50 special schools and referral units became academies during the year’s first 11 months. Some established ones ran into trouble. Seven sponsored academies were warned they must improve and an academy in Carlisle was placed in special measures for the second time in four years. E-Act, a chain that runs 31 academies, was reprimanded by the Education Funding Agency for “a culture involving prestige venues, large drinks bills, business lunches and first-class travel”. Its director-general, Sir Bruce Liddington, who once aspired to a “super-chain” of 250 academies, resigned. Al-Madinah, a free school in Derby, received a scathing Ofsted report, while an education department investigation found accounting irregularities.

Labour, which started opening academies while in office and expressed sympathy for the idea of free schools, could make little political capital out of these travails. Its policies and how they differed from Gove’s were opaque. When Education Guardian suggested to Stephen Twigg, then shadow education secretary, that his criticisms of Gove were too nuanced to grip public attention, he cheerfully replied “I plead guilty to nuance”. Nine months later, he was removed from the front bench. His replacement, Tristram Hunt, immediately disappointed those who hoped for more vigorous opposition. He wouldn’t shut down free schools, he said, or put them under local authorities. On the contrary, Labour would open new ones, calling them “parent-led academies”.

However, Hunt did prove more pro-active and media-savvy than Twigg when the triennial international Pisa tests of 15-year-olds showed the UK no better than average in reading, science and maths. Two days before the results were published, Hunt grabbed newspaper space to argue that they showed the ineffectiveness of Gove’s policies. Gove pointed out that pupils who sat the tests in 2012 received all but two years of their schooling under Labour. He went on to draw his own partisan lessons, but at least Hunt got his retaliation in first.

2013 showed that Gove’s conviction, determination and gifts for propaganda make him a formidable minister. Hunt gave a glimmer of hope that Labour could offer serious opposition. But there was no hope at all that Gove would follow the example of Leighton Andrews.
Primary school league tables show that almost two-thirds of the top performers were faith schools, even though they make up just a third of all state primaries in England.

According to school-by-school league tables, some 549 primaries saw every pupil reaching the expected standard in the three-Rs.

Faith schools dominated new league tables in the three-Rs today despite claims that they boost results by effectively selecting bright pupils “by the backdoor”.

Official rankings published by the Department for Education showed that six-in-10 of the top performing primaries were Church of England, Roman Catholic or Jewish schools.

Faith schools – which make up just a third of primaries nationally – were significantly over-represented in the list of the schools that registered “perfect” results in the three-Rs, it was revealed.

The majority of top-performers were Anglican and Bowdon CofE primary in Altrincham was named as England’s second-best school.

But the disclosure is likely to renew the debate over the admissions policies used by faith schools which often prioritise believers over other local pupils.

Primary school league tables 2013: faith schools ‘dominate official rankings’
The Church of England’s head of education has insisted that Anglican schools perform well because of their “distinctive ethos, rooted in Christian values”, with teachers developing children’s “social, spiritual and emotional intelligence... alongside their academic performance”.

In a recent article, The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd John Pritchard, said schools “fully reflect the society in which we live” and were not dominated by “white, middle class pupils”.

But the British Humanist Association warned today that schools were “unrepresentative” of their local communities.

It was claimed that leading faith schools had 23 per cent fewer pupils eligible for free meals than would have been expected in their surrounding area.

Richy Thompson, BHA campaigns officer, said research had shown that “any difference in academic performance between faith schools and other schools is solely due to the different intakes of each school”.

All children aged 11 are expected to gain “Level 4” in reading, writing and maths.

According to school-by-school league tables, some 549 primaries saw every pupil reaching the expected standard in the three-Rs.

Of those, 328 or 60 per cent were faith schools.

Figures show that 242 were Anglican schools, 81 were Catholic, three were generic Christian schools and two were Jewish.

A separate table ranked all schools by highest average points score gained by pupils, with an elite Level 6 worth 39 points while a low Level 2 carries just 15.

Fox Primary School in West London had the highest score with 34.1.

But Bowdon CofE primary was second with 34.0.

Five other faith schools were in the top 10: Bishop Gilpin CofE in London, Chislehurst (St Nicholas) CofE in Kent, King David Jewish primary in Manchester, The Queen’s CofE primary in Richmond-upon-Thames and North Cheshire Jewish primary in Cheadle.
School Inspection Performance

SCHOOLS WILL FACE SURPRISE OFSTED VISITS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE BEHAVIOUR

Chief inspector of schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw, promises ‘concerted focus on culture and behaviour’ in the year ahead

Sir Michael Wilshaw: ‘Classrooms must be orderly places. Around 700,000 pupils attend schools where behaviour needs to improve.’

Ofsted inspectors will begin making “no notice” visits to schools in England identified as rife with poor behaviour, Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector of schools, has announced.

“Classrooms must be orderly places. Around 700,000 pupils attend schools where behaviour needs to improve,” Wilshaw said as he promised “a concerted focus on culture and behaviour by Ofsted in the year ahead”.

“Unless this changes, teachers will struggle to create an environment in which all children will learn well.”

The chief inspector also said that the government should consider formal testing for primary school children at the end of key stage one – age seven – to measure progress.

The report also states that the significant growth in the number of schools with academy status “has helped raise the standards in many of England’s weakest schools”.

Wilshaw’s remarks came at the launch of Ofsted’s annual schools report card, which found that overall, schools and colleges had improved their performance compared with the previous year.

But challenges still remained, Wilshaw warned, highlighting “mediocre teaching and weak leadership” alongside regional variation in school quality and underachievement among white children from poor backgrounds.

“If our destination is the high peaks of a world-class education system and the economic benefits that follow, we are now in the foothills,” Wilshaw said.

The Ofsted survey of its inspections in the past year showed that nearly eight out of every 10 schools in England were judged to be good or outstanding, the highest proportion in Ofsted’s 20-year history.
“Serious challenges remain and all the while, many of our international competitors are improving at a faster rate than we are,” said Wilshaw.

“It is not an exaggeration to report that the story of our schools and colleges today is a tale of two nations. Children from similar backgrounds with similar abilities, but who happen to be born in different regions and attend different schools and colleges, can end up with widely different prospects because of the variable quality of their education.”

Wilshaw also said that it had been a mistake to abolish formal testing for primary and early secondary school years pupils at key stages one and three.

“I am calling on the government to reintroduce more formal external testing,” Wilshaw said.

“Talk to any good headteacher and they will tell you it was a mistake to abolish those tests. That’s because good teachers use those tests to make sure every child learns well.

“In getting rid of those tests we conceded too much ground to vested interests.”

But Christine Blower, head of the National Union of Teachers, said that the call for formal testing for seven-year-olds was “an unhelpful step”.

“We already have formal assessment in the early years and the phonics check at age five. This is all too much testing too soon,” she said.

There are now 485,000 more primary school pupils and 180,000 more secondary school pupils attending good or outstanding schools compared with a year ago.

“Looking at the evidence across all sectors, there are unmistakable signs that England’s education system is gradually improving,” said Wilshaw.

“Tenacious and committed teachers and leaders are at the forefront of this. At the same time, our new frameworks have raised expectations and established that only ‘good’ is good enough.”

But almost 250,000 pupils are taught in schools judged to be inadequate by Ofsted – with 13 local authorities having less than half of their pupils in schools rated good or better.

English and maths teaching was found to be weaker than other subjects. The report said that good teachers were not always being deployed where they would have the greatest impact.

Ofsted inspected 7,905 schools in 2012-13. The best primary schools were to be found in Darlington. The Isle of Wight and Barnsley were at the bottom of the national table for secondary school performance.
Sir Michael calls for tests abolished almost a decade ago to be reinstated amid concerns over standards in maths and English

A return to compulsory national curriculum tests for all seven and 14-year-olds was demanded today by chief schools inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw as essential for improving standards in maths and English.

The externally marked tests, taken by 600,000 for seven-year-olds, were abolished almost a decade ago after complaints that it was too early an age to put children through the stress of external testing. Those for 14-year-olds were scrapped four years later in 2008.

However, today’s annual report from education standards watchdog Ofsted revealed that - largely as a consequence - the weakest teaching was now seen in the first three years of primary schooling and that assessment of that age group by teachers was “inconsistent”.

By contrast, the strongest teachers were often deployed teaching 10 and 11-year-olds as they prepared to take their national curriculum tests at 11 - which would help schools do well in league tables.

“This suggests widespread deployment of the better teachers to teach pupils who are preparing for tests and examinations,” says the report - which also found there were fewer good or outstanding lessons delivered to 13 and 14-year-olds.

Sir Michael, who is chief executive of Ofsted, made a direct plea to Education Secretary Michael Gove to bring the tests back - a move that is likely to spark an outcry from teachers’ leaders and even lead to calls for a boycott of them if they are reintroduced.

In a speech to coincide with the publication of the report, he said: “Talk to any good headteacher and they will tell you it was a mistake to abolish those tests. That’s because good teachers use those tests to make sure every child learns well.

“On getting rid of the tests we conceded too much ground to vested interests. Our education system should be run for the benefit of children and no-one else.”

He added: “It is really up to the Government as to whether they’re willing to have that battle (to introduce the tests) but I think it is a battle worth having.”
School Inspection Performance

Sir Michael calls for tests abolished almost a decade ago to be reinstated amid concerns over standards in maths and English.

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All seven and 14-year-olds must take exams, says Ofsted chief Sir Michael Wilshaw

However, Christine Blower, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, described his call as "an unhelpful step".

"We already have formal assessment in the early years and the phonics check at age five," she said. "This is all too much testing too soon."

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, added: "Ofsted is wrong to set store by increased testing at key stage one (for seven-year-olds). Tests at this age are not an objective measure of performance." The answer was to improve teachers' assessment techniques.

A spokeswoman for the Department for Education said it was consulting on primary school assessment arrangements and would be making an announcement "in due course". It said it expected teachers to be accurate in their assessments of pupils.

In Sir Michael’s report, it also emerged that teaching standards were weakest in maths and English and in the lower ability sets. "Better teaching was seen, generally, in higher ability sets and in the upper age group," it said.

Around a third of lessons in the two core subjects was less than good. "Without a strong foundation in English and mathematics, children and young people are not prepared for the next stage in their education," it added.

The overall theme of the report was that there were grounds for optimism as nearly 80 per cent of schools were now judged to be good or outstanding - the highest proportion since Ofsted was founded 20 years ago. In addition, 90 per cent of those that need to improve were making progress.

Sir Michael said the “battle against mediocrity” was being won but major barriers still prevented England’s education system from competing with the best of the world - too much mediocre teaching and weak leadership, massive regional variations on the quality of education and the significant under-performance of children from low-income families, particularly white children.

A total of 1.75 million children were still taught either in inadequate schools or schools which needed to improve before they could be rated as good.

A regional breakdown showed children in many of the country’s urban areas - Camden, Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington and Tower Hamlets - were now guaranteed the opportunity to go to a good secondary. In the Isle of Wight, though, only 14 per cent of pupils attended a good secondary school. Other low performing authorities were Barnsley (22 per cent) and Stoke (34 per cent).
The 2013 Sats results show the percentage of primary school children in England achieving a level 4 pass in reading, writing and mathematics has risen slightly.

The number of primary school children in England achieving a level 4 pass in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2 (KS2), rose slightly on last year with 76% of pupils reaching the benchmark for their age group in 2013 compared with 75% in 2012.

Although the provisional result published by the Department for Education (DfE) show that further progress has been made, the one percentage point increase since the 2012 results suggest that a significant percentage of pupils are leaving primary school without a sufficient grasp of reading, writing and maths.

In fact the data shows that although the percentage of children getting a level 4 in writing and mathematics increased - up two percentage points and one percentage point respectively - the percentage of pupils reaching the same level for in reading has decreased by one percentage point to 86%.

63% of pupils achieved what the DfE call a ‘good’ level 4 or above (this means a test mark that is in the top two-thirds of the level 4 mark range) in both reading and writing whilst also getting a level 4 or above in writing.

Girls outperformed boys with 66% achieving this standard compared with 61% of boys. The figures of the percentage of pupils recording a ‘good’ level 4 have been published by the DfE for the first time in 2013.

We’ve put together some key charts below to illustrate the latest results:

Reading - Of all the subjects in the release, reading was the only one to see a decrease this year in the percentage of pupils scoring a level 4 or above in the key stage two test. Girls continued to outperform boys with 88% reaching this level compared with 83% of boys. However, the gap is narrowing as the results for boys were up one percentage point whilst girls saw a decrease of 2 percentage points.

Mathematics - Attainment in mathematics at level 4 or above increased by one percentage point on the previous year. Girls and boys continued to perform at a similar level although the DfE release highlights the slight gender gap when you look at level 5 results (above the expected level) - boys have outperformed girls again with 43% achieving a level 5 in maths compared with 39% of girls.

Girls actually improved more than boys at level 5 between 2012 and 2013 - girl’s results were up by 2% whereas boys only recorded a 1% increase.

Grammar, punctuation and spelling

For the first time, the 2013 tests included a grammar punctuation and spelling assessment. The results show that 74% of pupils achieved level 4 or above, with girls (79%) outperforming boys (69%).

Writing - According to the DfE release, the level of pupils reaching a level 4 or above in the writing teacher assessment has increased on the year - up two percentage points to 88%.

Just to confuse things, the DfE release also contains results of National Teacher Assessment. The chart above shows the percentage of pupils in all schools achieving a level 4 or above in the KS2 teacher assessments by subject.
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### Key stage 2 test levels of attainment by subject

**Coverage: England, all schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>% at level 4 or above</th>
<th>% at level 5 or above</th>
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<th>% at level 5 or above</th>
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<th>% at level 5 or above</th>
<th>Total number of eligible pupils</th>
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<td>41</td>
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TOP PERFORMING & IMPROVING PRIMARY SCHOOLS 2014

This is a list of top performing and improving schools based on the positive aspects of the most recent inspection and on the percentage achieving level 4 or above in both English and Maths

Arden Primary School            Griffin Primary School
Barnham Primary School          Heathlands Primary
Bempton Primary School          Holmesdale Infant School
Blakehill Primary School        Holy Cross
Blenheim Primary School & Children’s Centre Katherine Semar Junior School
Bromley Hills Primary School    Layton Primary School
Castledyke Primary School       Leadgate Infant & Nursery School
Deepcar St John’s CE Junior School Lomeshaye Junior School
Dewhurst Primary                Luston Primary School
Dovecotes Primary School        Maldon Primary School
Ellingham Primary school        Manor Field Primary
Ferndale Primary School         Marsh Green Primary School
Filton Hill Primary School      Marshfield Primary School
Forest Fields Primary & Nursery School Netherfield Primary School
Giffards Primary School         Nonington Church of England Primary School
Grendon C of E Primary School   Old Bank Primary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>School Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oriel Academy, West London</td>
<td>St John Fisher Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of Angels Catholic Infant School</td>
<td>St Mark’s CE Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Primary School</td>
<td>St Mary &amp; St Paul’s CE Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powers Hall Infant</td>
<td>St Nicholas’ Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princethorpe Junior School</td>
<td>St Thomas Wemeth C of E Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queenswell Junior School</td>
<td>Stokenchurch Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainham Village Primary School &amp; Nursery</td>
<td>Sythwood Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranelagh Primary</td>
<td>The Reddings Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redland Primary School</td>
<td>Thorne King Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Hood Beckhampton</td>
<td>Tow Law Millenium Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Thomas More Catholic Primary School</td>
<td>Trottiscliffe CE Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandbrook Community Primary School</td>
<td>Upton Cross Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedgeberrow Primary</td>
<td>Uxendon Manor Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Stars Primary School</td>
<td>West Meadows Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shotley Bridge Junior School</td>
<td>Weston Mill Community Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southbourne Junior School</td>
<td>Whitehall Junior School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Albans Road Infant School</td>
<td>William Law Twelvetree</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Anne’s C of E Primary School</td>
<td>Woodfield School</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Bernadette’s Catholic Primary School</td>
<td>Woodlands Park Primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Elpheges Infant School</td>
<td>Woodlands Primary, Grimsby</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Giles’ and St George’s C of E Primary School</td>
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</table>
Nearly three-quarters of children leaving Nottingham primary schools this year did so having reached expected levels. The majority of schools in the city performed well in Sats exams, with some seeing 90 per cent or more of pupils achieving the right standard. Some schools, however, were left with much room for improvement.

The Department for Education today reveals how 11 year olds across the country got on in their summer tests. In Nottingham, 73 per cent reached level four in reading, writing and maths combined, the benchmark standard. This was two per cent below the national average of 75 per cent.

Councillor David Mellen, portfolio holder for children’s services at the city council, said the results suggest a bright future for education. However, it comes at a time when seven city secondary schools are set to be slammed by Ofsted for poor standards. Mr Mellen said children performing well at primary school was encouraging.

He said: "If we have children doing well in primary school we believe this should be reflected in how well they do at secondary school. We are pleased to see that, once again, we are narrowing the gap on the national average."

Changes in the goalposts for standards in Sats make exact comparison with previous years difficult to make. Previously, the combined mark of overall English and maths was the benchmark. From this year, both the reading and writing elements of English were taken into consideration separately.

Nottingham has consistently lagged behind national levels, but has been closing the gap. In 2012, it was four per cent behind the national average. In individual subjects this year, Nottingham was slightly behind national levels in all.

Some schools were celebrating outstanding results, particularly St Patrick’s Catholic Primary, in Wilford, where every child reached level four in reading, writing and maths. Six other schools saw more than 90 per cent of children reach this level.

These were St Teresa’s Catholic Primary, Aspley (98 per cent); Blessed Robert Widmerpool Catholic Primary, Clifton (97); Haydn Primary, Sherwood (97); Hempshill Hall Primary, Bulwell (90); Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary, Bulwell (90); and Warren Primary, Top Valley (90).

Sats are seen as important indicators for the levels children reach, as well as a way of judging the performance of schools. Greenfields Community School in The Meadows saw 83 per cent of children reach the right levels.  Head teacher Terry Smith has put the school’s success down to everyone involved. He said: “It is all down to the hard work and dedication of staff and children, with the support of parents. It is very important we give children the best start possible to life."

Blue Bell Hill Primary, in St Ann’s, saw 77 per cent of children reach the right level. Head teacher Jo Bradley said good results are down to “schools in the city working hard to achieve the best for pupils”, but has raised concerns about the pressure the exams put on young children.

This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
NOTTINGHAM CLOSES THE GAP FOR PRIMARY-AGE PUPILS SATS

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Head teacher Jo Bradley said good results are down to “schools in the city working hard to achieve the best for pupils”, but has raised concerns about the pressure the exams put on young children.
A mile from the city centre, Forest Fields Primary and Nursery School serves a vibrant and diverse Nottingham community. Children join the Nursery at levels exceptionally below national. Thirty per cent of our pupils are on the SEN register; ninety three per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds; and eighty seven percent have English as their second, or even third, language. There are forty eight home languages represented in school, and during any academic year, many children enrol with no English at all. Developing literacy is clearly a challenge for the school.

Over recent years, there have been a variety of initiatives introduced to raise standards; high impact targets; focused work on accelerating progress; the early years communication, Language and Literacy programme; ‘reading recovery’; ‘Big Writing’; a revised monitoring and pupil progress programme have all made a contribution.

However, engaging and motivating some groups of children still presented a challenge. They needed to be inspired to understand how good literacy skills would enable them to extend their thinking and achieve beyond their expectations, and why being literate was such a crucial life skill.

What was missing were opportunities to apply their reading, writing and speaking and listening skills within meaningful contexts. The way forward, we thought, was to embed literacy within an integrated curriculum, but in a way that maintained rigour in literacy teaching and learning. 

Our school is fortunate in having a forward-thinking, innovative staff. But whole scale curriculum change is challenging; it needs commitment; and as professionals, teachers rightly want evidence that the impact of change will be worthwhile and positive.

For that reason, we decided to trial the approach in Year 6. The decision was strategic. The constraints of the testing regime makes the Year 6 timetable the least flexible in the school. If the curriculum could be accommodated here, it could surely be so elsewhere. But there was another advantage to Year 6. The frequent data collected from pupils in that year would provide evidence that would allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

In the first year of the project, the Year 6 team planned each new theme after revising the impact and feedback from the previous theme. Each theme had a launch, a hook, opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills and a ‘product’ at the end - a ‘real’ reason for writing. These included a script to accompany their own mini-documentaries on Africa; press conferences; writing and producing plays; organising charity events; pitching products; publishing poetry books and many more.
Whenever possible, the projects were linked to ‘real life’ events. For example, the project on Survivors drew on the rescue of the Chilean Miners. The children worked in news teams, each given a role - reporter, editor, columnist or photographer. They worked to tight deadlines and were updated on events using a live feed. Nottingham’s Evening Post agreed to get involved and even published a report of its own, celebrating the children’s achievements.

As Head and Deputy, we witnessed the children’s attitude to literacy work change. They were more engaged and knew what they were trying to achieve, the ‘learning objectives’ became real and motivating. Sometimes, their response was startling. We often heard them chattering about their learning in the dining hall. One reason the quality of their work improved was because they knew that an audience would be scrutinising it.

When they saw the results, teachers across the school were keen to get involved in the project. Two terms in and all classes were implementing an integrated curriculum. In this way, teachers created a bespoke curriculum which fulfils the requirements of the programmes of study whilst engaging and motivating pupils with themes such as Finding Nemo, Pirates, Rainforests, Titanic, Sharks and a Legacy topic.

Both value added and progress measures have been above national consistently in the last 4 years.

We are an expanding school and have just benefited from a major building programme. This has more than doubled the outdoor area and incorporated a refurbished Grade II listed building. Teachers and pupils alike are now excited by the opportunities outdoor learning will bring to our integrated approach to the curriculum.

Jo Keely (Deputy Headteacher) and Sue Hoyland (Headteacher)
Netherfield Primary School is a larger than average school which opened in 2005 following the amalgamation of the Infant and Junior schools. In 2007 it was placed in Special Measures. The current Headteacher arrived in September 2009. In 2010 the school received a Good judgement, surpassed in June 2013 when the school was judged to be Outstanding by Ofsted.

A significantly high proportion of children entering Netherfield Primary have poor speech, language and listening skills. In addition, many children have poor decoding skills, presenting major barriers to learning to read, along with the potential of significant risk of severe developmental delay.

Netherfield takes a whole community approach. Each year is launched with a visioning process - ‘PATH’ – (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope), which is attended by staff, governors, parents, school parliament and school supporters. A visual outline of the shared vision is produced and displayed, ensuring authentic ownership and acting as a reminder to keep the entire community on track.

Our School Development Plan is an outcome of the PATH. Each year previous PATHs are reflected upon, for all to walk the journey of school improvement, reminding everyone that with hard work, creative thinking and sheer determination, what we initially thought wasn’t possible can happen within our ‘no limits’ philosophy.

We take a systemic approach to enhancing learning. Seeing each individual within their unique system, their family and groups in which they belong.

A number of parents access reading and therapeutic support. Over 60 parents have been trained as reading volunteers; helping to accelerate progress across the whole school, ensuring a consistent, purposeful approach and pride for all involved.

Literacy, numeracy, ICT and CV writing courses are well attended by parents, as is the ‘job centre’ type resource. We are proud of the number of parents who have secured employment due to this support.

‘Netherfield Creative Learning Journey’ is planned around the particular needs of our community, its key drivers being:

- Basic Skills
- Enterprise
- Performing Arts
- ICT
- SEAL

Every classroom has a dedicated role-play area where children engage in activities, specifically planned to develop speaking and listening skills. Highly visual displays throughout the school enhance the priority of language development. A focus on interactions between pupils and staff, and staff and staff, ensure effective modelling, further developing vocabulary, language skills and positive interactions. Each classroom has a retreat area, for children to take themselves to, learning
to identify their moods, feelings and manage themselves effectively. Whilst behaviour in 2009 was poor, visitors now comment upon the enthusiasm children show for their learning, their exceptional manners and sheer pride in their school.

‘Pupils’ reading, writing and mathematical skills are promoted exceptionally well in every subject, but also through home learning and the ways in which school involve parents as the ‘experts’ in their children’s learning. Pupils love to stay overnight in the half termly ‘reading camps’ and their parents also work hard to help them to become eligible for these by supporting reading at home.’

Ofsted June 2013

In response to the high percentage of children leaving KS1 reading well below Age Related Expectations and a lack of reading fluency and comprehension in children leaving KS2 in 2009, the roles of ‘Reading Recovery’ ‘Switch On’ teachers were created alongside an ‘ELP’ Early Language Practitioner who has developed ECAT across the entire school.

‘Literacy and numeracy are taught very well and are reinforced by exciting topics that challenge pupils to think and use their reading, writing and mathematics skills.’

Ofsted June 2013

End of KS2 assessments over the last 3 years show the greatest proportion of children attaining at or above Age Related Expectations and for the first time in 2013 pupils successfully took the highest level papers in English and mathematics. Progress across the school for all pupils is good and much is outstanding.

The school’s exceptional Nurture provision enables vulnerable children who have experienced exclusion from previous schools to go on to make accelerated progress. Progress is not just reflected in their academic achievements/attainment but in the development of their self-management skills, social skills and abilities to interact confidently and articulately. All children accessing this provision continue to successfully attend their mainstream school.

In summary, not only has the school moved huge strides since 2009 to ensure a ‘high needs’ school population in a socially deprived area are achieving beyond National Averages, there is tangible evidence that through its systemic approach, with and through parents and the community, that the community itself is being transformed in a positive way.

This we believe is a new benchmark in education and a new tangible vision of the power of an educational institution to transform a socially deprived community through a direct, purposeful, systemic approach that has helped a community embrace an understanding and love of learning in the broadest sense.

www.netherfieldprimaryschool.com
At Morley School we are passionate about ensuring that all pupils, whatever their needs, are given the chance to fulfil their potential. OFSTED said that ‘equality of opportunity is one of the foundation stones on which the school’s provision is built.’ The school received its 4th Outstanding grading from OFSTED in June 2012. Although we are very proud of the pupils’ achievements, according to one the accolade was well deserved, ‘We are truly awesome – we don’t do mediocre.’

The success of the school, and the pupils, is a result of outstanding, exciting, stimulating, cross-curricular teaching which enables children to make sense of learning, allowing discrete teaching where appropriate. This is enriched with film, music, and a wide range of activities to hook into learning and provide experiences for writing. Children create films of historical events using their own photography alongside recorded interviews, they design and build gingerbread houses, fly helicopters from a local hotel’s helipad, and hunt Gruffalos in nearby woods. Our staff integrate structure and rigour whilst incorporating fun. All KS2 pupils take part in Spelling and Tables Bees, and the oldest pupils run an economic project which finances a 2 day skiing activity. Pupils across school learn French, handbells, and ukulele. We use our sports funding to pay for specialist sports coaches for all pupils. The children wrote and live, the school’s vision and aims, as do the staff. I am privileged to work with such talented and dedicated people. Visitors often comment on the atmosphere in school.

75% of pupils attained L5 in writing in 2013 KS2 assessments, with 13% at L6. Accelerated progress is around 50%. This is testament both to the pupils’ hard work, and to the staff’s creativity, high standards, aspirational targets and constant striving to improve.

In the pupils’ words,

‘Our school is exciting all the time. It’s like apple and rhubarb crumble. The lessons are amazing. We have great subjects and we use the local environment, Broomfield College and Morley Hayes to make our work more interesting. We have after school activities like choir, line dancing, French, sports, philosophy and golf.'
All of us are good at writing. When you see our work you will go WOW!!! Our teachers join in with fun and mischief, and we sometimes get to tell them off, like when we ran the school and made them come in pyjamas for Children in Need. Everything we get wrong, every mistake we make, is just a step to achieving our goals.’

And from OfSTED,

‘Pupils engage in memorable learning experiences. In lessons the atmosphere is electric. Pupils are not sure what to expect and this curiosity fuels the desire to learn.’

‘The outstanding curriculum is steered by the pupils who have a say in what they want to learn. ICT underpins all aspects of learning.’

Morley is a small school. The 80 pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and we have little Pupil Premium. This means there is no additional funding to support pupil learning so resources are limited. We have no hall or outdoor space, other than a small playground. We have a high mobility rate, and a reputation for supporting pupils with additional needs.

Despite these ‘drawbacks’ the school is successful. We achieve well in sporting competitions. Pupils have gone on to represent County and country. The school was a finalist in an environmental competition and for Educational Establishment of the Year. We hold Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award, Derbyshire Anti-bullying Commitment, ActiveMark, and Eco Schools Silver. We are a Partner School with Derby County, for School Based Initial Teacher Training in Outstanding schools, and for trainee Headteachers. As a Local Leader in Education I work with a Teaching School Alliance.

Three statements fill me with pride. Our LI said our school was amazing, that the curriculum was incredibly rich, and that children have a magical experience here; a pupil said that if he had enough money he would build a secondary school next door so he could stay here for ever; and another pupil wrote,

‘The inspector said our school was outstanding in every area. We could have told her that! Our school is out of this world. It’s the best school ever!’

Kate Marsland
Headteacher Morley Primary School
Derbyshire
FALCONER’S HILL INFANT SCHOOL

‘THIS IS A SCHOOL WHERE, NOT JUST EVERY CHILD, BUT EVERY FAMILY MATTERS’ OFSTED

Falconer’s Hill Infants is a six class Infant school with 180 children on roll. The school is regularly over-subscribed. Ofsted recognised that many children arrive below average in attainment and the majority leave with above average attainment.

The school predominantly serves an area of social housing and has worked very hard to engage families in the life of the school and their children’s learning. The school has a very high percentage of children with special needs.

We are of the firm belief that ‘Education should be about lighting fires NOT filling buckets’ and learning at FHIS is dynamic and motivational. We use out local environment to stimulate learning. We thematically teach and our Learning Adventures are linked to Silverstone (home of motor racing) and Ashby St Legers (home of the Gunpowder Plotter Robert Catesby) amongst others. We regularly take learning outside and have a Green Curriculum- children are passionate about taking care of their world which has led to our recognition as an Ambassador Green Flag Eco school. Our school grounds are outstanding and teaming with learning spaces such as a living willow maze, an adventure hill, a ‘where our wild things are’ nature area and a garden- to name but a few!

We have a strong values ethos and have developed a highly effective and unique way of engaging children in understanding and displaying strong values that is linked to recycled bottle-tops and animals! Ofsted reported that the promotion of SMSC is a strength of the school.

Children need to feel safe and supported to reach their potential. As a leading Mental Health School we are very aware of the importance of emotional wellbeing and the impact this has on a child’s ability to learn. We engage an outstanding Play Therapist to work with our most emotionally challenged children. We have a highly effective PSHE curriculum that develops resilience and wellbeing.

We NEVER exclude but support the most challenging of children. We were graded ‘Outstanding’ for behaviour and safety.
We have worked extensively with the educationalist Roy Leighton and developed the ‘Learning Line’ to encourage perseverance and resilience. We are highly innovative and we have designed ‘Learning Stars’ that encourage children to develop appropriate skills and attitudes that are transferable across all their learning.

Children are very involved in the whole process of self-improvement. We engage them in generating success criteria across the curriculum and then marking themselves against these to identify where and how they can improve their outcomes.

We have designed targets to be child and parent friendly. Assessment across the curriculum is colour banded- each colour relating to an achievement level. Everyone has a target book that travels back & forth between home & school so parents are kept informed of their child’s progress on a daily basis and can support home learning. The school also uses an on-line tracker to input assessment data for every child every six weeks. This supports analysis of pupil progress and is also used by the Inclusion team to monitor intervention programmes.

We encourage ‘big thinking’ and engage all the children in P4C (Philosophy for Children)- this encourages rational thinking, understanding, respect and resilience as well as providing opportunities to promote more sophisticated thinking and analysis in the more able.

We encourage the support of parents by excellent communication. One way we do this is to invite parents to attend ‘Good Morning’ for the first fifteen minutes of every day. This is a time to look at work, speak to the class teacher, TA or Headteacher, and share activities with their children.

We ask parents to RAG rate their own involvement in home learning and then set them the challenge of trying to improve their rating. We provide after school ‘Good Afternoon’ sessions where the teacher models how to help at home.

The school has excellent community cohesion and this year a multi-national organisation – ‘Cummins Engine Company’, has been so impressed with the work the school does to support the most vulnerable children, they have sponsored the building of an extension to the school. This has allowed us to run nurture groups, family breakfasts and provide a sensory space for our emotionally challenged children.
Grendon Church of England Primary is a small, rural school in Northamptonshire. After a period of sustained improvement, the school is now graded as Outstanding in all areas under the new OFSTED Inspection framework and is consistently amongst the top performing Primary Schools in England. The school is currently ranked number 1 in Northamptonshire for high achieving pupils, number 40 in the Telegraph’s Top 1000 Primary Schools list and is one of only 159 Primary Schools in England to be recognised by the Minister of State for Schools for its outstanding achievements in the 2013 Performance Tables. The Senior Managers of the school won the Leadership Team Award at the 2013 Northamptonshire Education Awards.

In September 2009, a radical overhaul of the curriculum challenged previously accepted educational conventions and pedagogies. Schemes of work, external guidance and national strategies were consigned to the scrap heap; replacing them was the notion that the best people to create and shape the learning experiences of the pupils at Grendon were the school staff and, of course, the children themselves. A unique approach to learning was developed, rooted in enquiry based, real world projects and referred to by the school as the Global Curriculum. This pedagogy has brought wide acclaim, with OFSTED reporting that the Global Curriculum is making an ‘exceptional contribution’ to the achievement of all pupils.

In developing the Global Curriculum, one of the greatest mind shifts was recognising that a linear, content driven curriculum, delivered in isolation, falls short of providing pupils with the skills necessary to thrive in future life. As a result, pupils at Grendon are encouraged to contribute readily to the content of their learning experiences and teachers are expected to integrate these ideas into the curriculum. The Global Curriculum responds to current affairs, allows for areas of particular interest to be studied in depth and requires pupils to become engaged in and lead enterprise activities. OFSTED state that ‘Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage in education’ and the school’s Denominational Inspection Report recognises the school’s ‘passion to provide the pupils with skills which enable lifelong learning, care for others and a desire to make a difference in the world.’
School staff challenge the traditional view of the classroom and create immersive learning environments that resemble theatre sets more closely than they do classrooms. OFSTED stated that ‘Pupils learning as a response to such a strong learning environment is exceptional’ and that ‘learning environments are so enjoyable and stimulating that children cannot fail to learn.’

Teaching staff at Grendon are rightly recognised as the expert facilitators of learning in the school and this affords them a high level of autonomy to interpret the school’s Global Curriculum in inspiring and innovative ways. Responsibility for organising timetables and the delivery of individual subjects has been delegated almost entirely to class teachers - there is no preferred or prescriptive methodology that governs the structure of the school day and teachers take calculated risks in a supportive, ‘no fear’ culture. Senior Leaders have created streamlined systems of accountability and are discerning in their implementation of external guidance so that teachers can deliver outstanding provision with very few constraints.

Understanding the great ease with which children can readily access information and drive their own learning has made the traditional model of the teacher as the ‘font of all knowledge’ redundant. Grendon’s teaching staff are adept at facilitating enquiry based learning which has driven high levels of engagement and independence. Observing this approach, OFSTED recognised outstanding teaching practice in all phases of the school.

OFSTED praised the Leadership and Management of the school for bringing about ‘marked improvements’ since the last inspection which have ‘driven up standards and significantly increased the rate of pupils’ progress’. Importantly, OFSTED also recognise the school’s ‘ambitious vision’ as a ‘powerful indicator of the school’s further capacity to improve’. The school is currently involved in wider collaboration with other high performing schools at a local, national and international level who share the same ambitious vision and philosophy. By championing immersive, project based learning with pupils’ independence at the core, Grendon CE Primary provides the best possible learning experiences for its pupils and aspires to shape the educational landscape through continued innovation.

John Wayland
Head Teacher

www.grendonprimary.net
Heathlands Primary School and Foundation Stage serves the village of Rainworth, near Mansfield. It is an average sized primary school with 175 on roll and 30 in our F1 class. There are currently six classes and the Foundation Stage unit, with all pupils being taught in single age group classes.

Under the previous Headteacher, the school had significantly grown in numbers and been re-housed in a brand new building. It already had a good reputation, especially for the care of its pupils. When I took up post, in September 2009, I knew that it was important to build on these strengths.

During my first two terms, there were various opportunities for staff, governors and parents to input into the vision for the future, including a stakeholder Development Day. At this, all staff, governors and linked outside agencies were able to spend time together to celebrate and share with me the strengths and successes of the school. It was also an opportunity to look to the future and agree priorities for school development over the next few years.

It became very clear that, whilst stakeholders were pleased with the atmosphere and ethos of the school, it was also recognised that there were inconsistencies in learning and this was having an impact on progress and attainment.

Effective assessment systems were crucial, so we spent much of the first year reviewing and improving current practice. We worked together to moderate our assessments in order to decide what good progress and attainment looked like and how we could ensure that all pupils were supported to achieve the best that they could. We introduced specific individual target setting, regular pupil progress reviews and gap analysis to identify vulnerable groups and individuals. All of these systems led to very focused and individualised intervention strategies. They also increased teachers’ awareness of their accountability for the progress and attainment of pupils in their classes.

During the second year, we moved our focus to ethos of the school. Our catchment is predominately white British and we felt that our pupils needed support to recognise and value differences. This led to the development of our Valuing Diversity Strategy. This was about all individuals being valued and having a voice. It combined equality, rights and responsibilities with behaviour management and anti-bullying strategies to ensure the equality of all, pupils and adults alike. It became the underlying principle throughout our whole school community and linked closely into our rewards and sanctions, including our Citizenship Awards.

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By the summer 2013, the pupils’ work, along with the school and national data, was showing clearly the impact that all these changes were having on accelerated progress and attainment. This had not been a ‘quick fix’, but a carefully planned, strategic approach to whole school improvement which had led to sustainable changes in practice, and improvements in achievement for all of our pupils. This was recognised during January 2014 inspection: ‘this is a good school’. Where next? This is not the end of the journey, and we already have plans for the next steps starting with a new shared long term vision. The future for Heathlands is exciting and I think our motto sums it up well: Achieve Succeed Fly!

Caron Wagstaff
Headteacher
School Inspection Performance

With an improved ethos and strong assessment embedded, year three gave us the opportunity for curriculum development. We focused on developing cross curricular links and topics like Castles, Inventions, Pirates and Disasters excited and motivated our pupils, especially the boys. Staff were able to be more flexible with timetabling and ‘take risks’ with the learning opportunities they were offering their pupils. This included increased use of external specialists, like musicians and artists. There were also increased opportunities for parents to learn alongside their children.

September 2012 saw an OFSTED inspection. The report recognised the progress and improvements made, but agreed with our self-evaluation that the changes had yet to impact on end of Key Stage 2 attainment. The inspection led us to consider more carefully the learning behaviours of our children and this was the focus of research and changes in practice, leading to increasing opportunities for pupils to lead and be responsible for their own learning.

By the summer 2013, the pupils’ work, along with the school and national data, was showing clearly the impact that all these changes were having on accelerated progress and attainment. This had not been a ‘quick fix’, but a carefully planned, strategic approach to whole school improvement which had led to sustainable changes in practice, and improvements in achievement for all of our pupils. This was recognised during January 2014 inspection: ‘this is a good school’

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Caron Wagstaff
Headteacher
Woodlands is at the heart of the community. It is a larger than average primary school in an area of high deprivation with a high percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school is part of an alliance of schools that work together to share and develop good practice.

In 2011 the school was placed into special measures as a result of poor results. Rather than accept defeat, the staff as a whole took up the challenge to turn the school around. This resulted in us being taken out of measures within 18 months and in 2012 98% of pupils had made 2 levels progress in maths and 100% in English, putting the school in the top 9% for progress nationally. At our next inspection in October 2013 the school was judged to be good.

So what has changed?

The team has a shared vision that feeds into all we do, including the design of our new school building. We have developed a culture that gives adults as well as children permission to make mistakes when trying out new approaches to learning. Our aim is to make learning aspirational, inspirational and irresistible.

A thorough review of our School Development Plan led to a much more focused approach with only three key areas within raising attainment, quality of teaching, leadership and management, all of which are interconnected. Everything we did subsequently had to feed into the plan.

We introduced Research lessons, where teachers work together to plan and deliver sessions based on identified areas for development. These are reflected upon to assess the impact of different approaches to learning. This has contributed towards the improved quality of teaching across the school. We hold regular review meetings of our practice to reflect and improve. This approach has given teachers greater ownership of their own professional development and created sustainability.

The outstanding practice identified within our Foundation Stage was moved into the early part of Key Stage One. Year 1 is carefully and purposefully designed to build upon Foundation Stage principles and approaches at the beginning of the year and develops children’s attitudes and confidence over the year to enable them to enter a more formal style of learning in Year 2. This is achieved through careful tailoring of the physical environment and the level of challenge and rigour in both independent and adult supported activities.
We use Pupil Premium money to employ two members of staff to work specifically on developing reading skills. They began by establishing a reading area with quality resources and now work with groups or individuals to target specific issues.

We made learning ‘real’ by creating hooks at the start of a topic to draw the children in. These include visits and visitors, problems and challenges. We also set a challenge for the end of the work, this usually involves the parents, which has helped to engage them in their children’s learning.

In order to ensure we can measure the impact of all of these strategies we have tightened up on our monitoring systems, using data meetings and pupil progress meetings to ensure children are on track. The school has adopted the iTrack system which allows us to identify and track specific groups of children.

Over the past few years we have strengthened our leadership and management, including our governing body who now take a very active part in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and the progress made by children.

We have reflected inwardly but not remained introvert and constantly look outwards to identify and adopt ideas and strategies that will enhance the quality of teaching and learning and enable us to provide all our pupils with the life skills they need to succeed.

As a school we are still moving forward and our aim now is to become an outstanding school. This and the move into our new school building mean there are exciting and demanding times ahead but everyone is up for the challenge.

For more information on Woodlands primary school please visit;

www.woodlands.ne-lincs.sch.uk

Woodlands Primary School.
Pinewood Crescent
Grimsby
NE Lincs
DN33 1RJ
01472 500900
Holmesdale Infant School is a group 1 school with 120 pupils on roll.

The school receives children from a range of backgrounds. It primarily serves pupils from the local area, but a number of parents choose to bring their children from further afield because of the school’s excellent reputation. The majority of pupils are from white British families with the proportion claiming free school meals below average. The school is a happy place with a very positive ethos.

Attainment on entry is below average. We find that we have to work hard in order to achieve outcomes at the end of year 2 that are consistently above national averages.

The OFSTED inspections in 2007 and July 2013 graded us outstanding in all areas and we have worked tirelessly to maintain this status. Our most recent OFSTED recognised;

‘Teachers provide stimulating and challenging lessons, reflecting consistently high expectations.’

Our journey to excellence has been through the development of a vibrant creative curriculum and use of outdoor education which strives to make the teaching come alive and the learning memorable. Lessons are practical and ‘hands on’ with children involved in independent learning. Staff are highly skilled in AfL and planning for support and challenge. Because of this our children display exemplary behaviour and enjoy coming to school.

Our whole school child centred approach includes many innovative responses to children’s needs such as Forest Schools, continuous provision in all key stages, regular enrichment days, Dad’s reading events and science weeks. We work hard to develop a sense of community and are proud to have achieved many quality initiatives and awards including ECO Green Flag (4th award), Artsmark Gold (2nd award), Leading Parent Partnership, Full International School Award, Sing Up Silver, Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark 5.

We look forward to building on this success and will continue to support other schools on their journey to excellence. We all recognise the challenges ahead but feel privileged to make a difference to the lives of our children.

Co-Headteachers: Gillie Oldfield and Catherine Robinson
School Inspection Performance

East of England

This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
ESSEX’S EDUCATION CHIEF WARNS AGAINST COMPLACENCY

Essex’s education chief has warned against complacency after primary schools in the county showed a slight improvement overall in their SAT results.

The league table data released by the Department for Education (DfE) today showed that 75% of year 6 pupils in Essex reached the required Level 4 standard in reading, writing and maths this year – exactly the national average score and a percentage point improvement on the 74% of Essex primary school pupils who made the grade last year.

Essex County Council’s cabinet member for education and lifelong learning, Ray Gooding, said it was encouraging that results in Essex’s primary schools were “heading in the right direction”.

“I would like to congratulate all teachers, parents and pupils for their hard work and achievement in improving results at Key Stage 2,” he said.

“I am particularly proud to learn that 12 Essex schools achieved a fantastic 100% in their results, with a further 66% of schools achieving 90%. Overall 211 Essex schools achieved above the national average of 75%, proof that our results are heading in the right direction.

Schools that shone in the county include Millfields Primary School in Wivenhoe near Colchester, which was the joint 9th best primary school in the country for the average SATs score per pupil. Hamilton Primary School in Colchester was joint 15th while Perryfields Junior School in Chelmsford was joint 16th.

However, Mr Gooding warned schools not to rest on their laurels.

He added: “We must not be complacent. We are always striving to achieve the highest standard of education in Essex to give the children in our county the best possible start in life and will continue to look at how we can achieve even higher in the future.”

At teacher’s union NUT, general secretary for Essex, Jerry Glazier, also cautioned against using the table to compare different schools that may be facing different challenges.

He said: “People mustn’t fall into the trap of looking at schools at the top of the list and thinking they are doing better than those at the bottom.

“Some schools may be facing a range of socio-economic challenges, such as poverty, in their catchment, which works against academic attainment. It doesn’t mean teachers at these schools are doing excellent work.”

The education chief has warned schools against complacency.
ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

At St John Fisher Catholic Primary School the love of God helps us all to live, learn and grow to be a happy, caring and welcoming community.

Every is equal Sharing together Understanding the way of Jesus St John Fisher, pray for us

St John Fisher is a larger than average primary school. Many pupils live a considerable distance from the school and travel each day by bus. Most of the pupils come from White British families. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average but increasing, and the number learning English as an additional language is low. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools status, Investors in People and the Eco Schools Bronze Flag.

The Headteacher and senior leaders have created a shared sense of direction for the school and a commitment to improvement. Members of the enlarged senior team have good balance of complementary skills. Rigorous tracking systems evaluate and support pupil’s progress. Leaders ensure that teaching is good by close monitoring, lesson observation, scrutiny of pupils’ books and teachers; planning and, more unusually, through feedback from pupils. Self-evaluation is accurate and monitoring is increasingly thorough. As a result, the school has been able to focus on areas requiring improvement, such as writing, boys’ achievement and opportunities for the most able, with whole school training where required. Middle managers also ensure progress in all areas, in part through the extended curriculum.

Governors make an outstanding contribution to the work of the school by their commitment and thorough approach. They are constantly looking at ways to develop and improve, they support the work of the school through regular visits and have clear views to inform priorities for development. There is good commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities and ensuring that there is no discrimination. This is particularly evident in enrichment activities with opportunities for all to participate fully. The school places a high priority on safety and safeguarding and constantly reviews its policies. Robust child protection procedures meet all current requirements. The school promotes community cohesion well. Links with the local community and parishes are strong and there is a good understanding, as reflected in displays, of the global community. The impact of existing links with the outside world is not rigorously evaluated, however, assess its impact on the quality of education and pupils’ awareness.

For any enquires, please contact the office on 0208-508-6315
Darren Woollard, Headteacher

Blenheim is a large primary school (620 pupils) set in beautiful grounds. The majority of children are white British, with the number of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium above the national average. I was appointed as Headteacher in September 2012, although I have been part of the school’s senior leadership team since 2006. During that time, the school has undergone a number of changes in order to drive improvement and ultimately raise standards.

One of the greatest challenges for us was to create an engaging curriculum, which would inspire, motivate and challenge our pupils to become lifelong learners. In 2006 we therefore began creating our own curriculum, a process which continues to evolve. We talked to pupils about their interests and planned learning around different themes, many covering aspects of history and geography, but some more imaginative ideas too, including, pirates, Harry Potter and introducing Shakespeare through active storytelling. We also focused on learning outside the classroom; the environment which we have available to us is amazing, and we make use of our surroundings in all areas of the curriculum as well as providing further enrichment through school visits and residential trips.

As in many schools, writing seemed to always be a key area in our school improvement plan. In 2009 we began to focus on consistency across the school, as we found that teachers often used different vocabulary which did not allow for effective transference of skills. As our use of language became more consistent, our teaching of writing also became more creative; instead of writing instructional texts for making a sandwich, we began writing instructions for a hunting a werewolf. Our boys particularly enjoy writing horror, but their passion for creative writing has enabled them to tackle more emotive subject matter. Teaching narrative and exposing pupils to the high level language we expected from them, made them enthusiastic about writing and has helped us to reach high standards year after year. Assessment plays a key role and in addition to teachers’ marking, pupils have become confident in self-assessment.
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Progress and accountability were areas where we once lacked rigour and this improved through our approach to termly assessment. Teachers are required to analyse the data from their class every term, focusing on the progress made by individual pupils and reporting to senior leaders. Where any underperformance is identified, we act quickly to ensure that support is in place and our pupils continue to make progress towards their targets. We are also committed to professional development, with staff meetings frequently focused on teaching and learning, allowing year groups time to work together to share good practice.

In June 2013 we were inspected by Ofsted and the school was graded good in all areas. They commented, ‘Attainment in English and mathematics at KS2 is above national averages, especially in reading, and also for the most able pupils in mathematics. Attainment is highest for those who have been in the school throughout their education because of the on-going emphasis on improvement.’

In addition to the academic success which Blenheim has achieved, pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There are opportunities to get involved in sports such as football, cricket, tag rugby, netball, athletics and cross country, all of which are linked to local competitions and events. We also have more creative clubs, including drama, survival, street dance and music, where pupils can perform with our choir and orchestra.

Blenheim is an exciting place to work. We are always looking to the future and embracing new ideas and challenges. Our pupils enjoy coming to school; they are proud of the school and its success, and they are confident, enthusiastic and resilient learners with bright futures.

For more information please visit;

www.blenheimerprimary.co.uk
Giffards Primary School

Our Creative Learning Journey

Giffards Primary School is much larger than average with 435 pupils. The percentage of FSM is increasing, having gone from below average in 2010 to above average in 2013 with 28.7% now in receipt of FSM. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement is above average.

Our Ofsted in July 2010 graded us as ‘GOOD’ they noted that we had focused appropriately on developing pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills and that these had had a positive impact on raising standards by moving children from their on entry level of below national to average attainment at the end of KS2. They suggested that we now needed to focus on:

‘Raising standards in English and mathematics further for example by: developing more effective cross-curricular links and imaginative activities where pupils can work independently and apply their literacy and numeracy skills.’

Curriculum review

This prompted us to review our curriculum, which whilst ‘topic’ centred was based on the QCA schemes of work which teachers felt were restrictive and lacked creativity and fun! The process of revitalising our curriculum started immediately. We went back to basics by focusing on how children learn best. We consulted the children about what helped them learn, what they wanted from a curriculum and what engaged and excited them. We agreed a set of guiding principles that now underpin each curriculum plan.

Each topic theme was designed to inspire children through a creative curriculum. As part of this teachers planned experiences to ‘hook’ the children in. The children then worked towards some purposeful event which parents were invited to; this could be an exhibition, performance, party or other such exciting finale. We carefully planned opportunities for writing that extended and practised the genres taught during literacy into cross curricular work.

Pupil engagement – Developing Wow moments!

Teachers quickly embraced the freedoms that moving away from prescriptive QCA schemes gave us. We ensured the new curriculum was designed to engage our hard to reach children, which at Giffards was boys. Dinosaur hunting, pirates, castles, the circus and Toy Story were introduced into the curriculum, and became instant hits. We made the curriculum come alive by developing more opportunities for speaking and listening, drama and role play. We introduced Pie Corbett’s - talk for writing as the basis for all literacy work and enriched the curriculum with quality texts. Storytelling was made practical by using actions and story telling maps that the children could recall and imitate when writing.

We developed lasting, creative partnerships with the Royal Opera house. Storytellers, artists, musicians and dancers were invited into school. We ensured that all year groups had opportunities to use the arts to improve writing and develop their cultural awareness by using stories from around the world. The children learnt how to act, work in a group and make decisions.
about the roles they took. They experienced problem solving and had opportunities to use their imagination. Teachers’ incorporated more first hand experience into lessons, we bought in visitors and practical workshops to make learning relevant, we even have a circus on the school field every year in which our year 3 pupils perform. The children’s confidence and engagement has grown, their vocabulary has expanded and with it their desire and ability to write, as a result attainment went up. The children were having fun, attendance rose and parental engagement grew – all an added bonus!

Raising Attainment

Woven through the new curriculum were carefully planned opportunities for writing and reading that extended and practiced the genres taught during literacy into cross curricular work. The Leadership team focussed on monitoring the standards of writing achieved through the foundation subjects, to ensure they matched those achieved in Literacy lessons. We engaged children further by introducing self assessment and peer assessment systems. To raise pupil aspirations and develop independence, we introduced ‘steps to success’ and levelling sheets as part of expected class practice across all subjects. Parental workshops were held across all year groups so parents understood what was expected of their children, goody bags with practical resources were given out to support parents in working with their children at home.

Data tracking

Underpinning all the work on developing a more creative curriculum has been robust, rigorous data tracking. We needed to ensure our changes were having a positive impact.

Our results for both attainment and progress have shown year on year improvements. In 2012 we achieved 100% level 4+ in English and 98.3% in Maths.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English 2 levels progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maths 2 levels progress</td>
<td>71.4</td>
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<td>88.1</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maths 12 points progress</td>
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<td>79.7</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>98.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Added All subjects</td>
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<td>100.3</td>
<td>101.0</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentile rank</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through Pupil progress meetings, staff are held to account for the performance and progress of each pupil and interventions are planned and their effectiveness reviewed. Targets are set for individual children at danger of not making at least expected progress. Quality assurance teams have also been set up to moderate the work between and across year groups so all staff are consistent in levelling and assessing work.

Through a culture of creativity we have raised the attainment, aspirations and self esteem of our pupils and helped children develop a love of learning. Our future challenge will be to do it all again with a new curriculum.

Nicky Haslam, Headteacher of Giffards Primary School, Thurrock
**The Reddings Primary & Nursery School**

‘Success for All’

The Reddings Primary School is a small one-form entry school with Primary Support Base (Local Authority Specialist facility for learners with Statements for Emotional and Behaviour difficulties).

The proportion of children that are entitled to Pupil Premium and have been identified with Special Education Needs is above average. The school is becoming more multi-cultural and therefore the number of children who speak English as an additional language is also above national averages.

I originally joined the school in September 2003 as the Deputy Head in the midst of what could be described as ‘turbulent times’. Head Teachers came and went whilst as a teaching team we were desperately trying to provide the children with stability and high quality learning opportunities through delivering the Intensifying Support Programme. This was driven by the Local Authority as we were identified by them, as a school ‘causing concern’.

Pupil numbers rapidly decreased, due to a fall in local birth rate but also as a loss of faith in the school by parents and the local community.

In January 2006 I was appointed as Head Teacher. The Reddings only had one direction to go and faced with a rather large deficit budget, strategic decisions for change had to have maximum impact at minimum cost!

It was time to rebrand, rebuild and relaunch which was exactly what we did! Behaviour expectations were formalised, uniform was ‘re-introduced’, children were placed firmly at the centre, and a new vision, written by all stakeholders, was created – a ‘new school’ was launched. Teaching and learning focussed upon basic skills in Reading, Writing, Maths and Science. Teachers felt empowered to deliver exciting and inspiring lessons, children enjoyed coming to school and end of year achievement outcomes improved.

Ofsted visited in September 2007 and judged the school as ‘Good’ - capacity to improve was graded as ‘outstanding’. The recognition of the school’s improvement continued with a letter from the Department of Children, Schools and Families congratulating the school for ‘excellent performance’ placing the school in the top 100 most improved schools for sustained improvement.
The Ofsted inspection enabled us to shape our vision, the outcomes identifying writing as a focus and developing a more creative approach to embed the key skills across the curriculum.

Writing became the priority focus for the whole school and our ‘Reddings’ version of ‘Big Write’ was introduced. Included within this project was ‘Literacy through Drama’ as a lack of ‘life experiences’ was proving a real barrier to creative writing. Weekly lessons included performing arts led by professionals from a theatre company.

Children developed confidence and skills in improvisation and communication which began to transfer to their writing. Learning environments were enhanced with displays that were interactive and could be used by the learners to develop independent working strategies. The introduction of Learning Walks enabled effective monitoring and often included members of the School Council or Governors.

Curriculum enrichment was instrumental in school improvement, providing the children with high quality experiences within school and through excursions enabled the children to make ‘real links’ across subjects providing learning with meaning.

This triggered a whole school drive to ‘revamp’ the curriculum. A more thematic creative approach was introduced – which proved incredibly popular with the children. As part of this development whole school themed weeks were introduced where visitors and events were planned enabling the children to have a more holistic approach to learning – the visit from the Zulus is still a major talking point in the school!

As the creative curriculum evolved I was able to embed music throughout the school. Having brought music, and in particular, singing to The Reddings in 2003, I wanted children to have the opportunity to learn musical instruments. The ‘Wider Opportunities’ music scheme introduced children to the violin and more recently Djembe drumming. Music provision has grown with specialist teachers offering musical instrument experiences throughout the school.

Having worked so hard as a team to accelerate progress, raise attainment and to offer the most exciting and stimulating learning opportunities across the school the arrival of Ofsted in July 2012 was our opportunity to share the positive outcomes of our journey.

They wrote “This is a good school, which places great importance on pupils’ achievement and well-being. The School is led and managed very well by the Head Teacher, who has gained the confidence of the staff and governing body. She is supported well by the senior and middle leaders, particularly in relation to raising achievement and improving teaching. Everyone works well together as a team and staff morale is high”.

Since the inspection I don’t believe that we have every worked so hard! Teaching is moving from ‘Good’ to ‘outstanding’. Personalised interventions are effectively tracked, enabling learners to further accelerate their learning. Marking is age appropriate and has impact. The developmental comments provide opportunities for learners to respond, practise and give new learning challenges ‘a go’

I feel really privileged to hold the title of ‘head teacher’ and our journey continues as we strive to achieve ‘outstanding’

Tracy Prickett
This Community school with Nursery caters for boys and girls from 3-11 years of age (Nursery to Year 6). The school roll has recently risen to 450 children, plus a total of 60 places in the Nursery.

The school is situated in the south of the London Borough of Havering and is set in spacious grounds.

There has been a school on this site since 1785 when a lease of land was made to the church for a school. The school badge reflects this. The oldest building on site is the 1872 building known to us as “the Church Building”.

The school possesses a large field, two large playgrounds, two halls, an ICT Suite and a library.

The school offers a welcoming and caring environment to all children and the adults who work in, or visit it. As a community, we value the diversity of cultures, religions, beliefs, abilities and gifts amongst our community.

The children are taught to respect and value these differences. Children’s achievements, both in and out of school, are celebrated on a weekly basis.

We have a firm belief that pupils succeed in school when they have firm foundations to build upon, so right from the start at Rainham Village Primary and Nursery we hope to work in partnership with families to develop each child’s full potential. We recognise that each child is an individual and strive to live by our motto of “quality education meeting individual needs”.

There are clear procedures and policies in place throughout the Nursery and School which focus both on academic achievement and personal success, alongside physical, spiritual, social and moral development.

Many of the children are from families who have had a long association with the school.

We help children to develop socially through the curriculum, extracurricular activities and playtimes. Frequent opportunities occur for children to work together and to learn to be useful members of the school community.
Children are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and to help and support each other.

The spiritual development of children is promoted through collective worship, religious education, the curriculum in general and the quality of relationships. We aim to help children develop a sense of wonder and awe and reflect upon these feelings. The moral development of children is promoted through the guidelines for behaviour. Every opportunity is taken to help children understand the difference between right and wrong and to develop principles to guide their behaviour and moral choices.

Our recent Ofsted in June 2013 recognised us as a “good school”.

The report states that:

“The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have established a culture of high expectations and a positive environment in which pupils achieve well. They lead by example and are well supported by all members of staff. Often from low starting points, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that they reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. The school provides good support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. As a result, these pupils achieve well.

Most teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Teachers use questioning effectively and build positive relationships with pupils, helping them to do their best. Pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently good. They are proud of their school and are keen to learn. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Attendance has improved and is now above average. Families from all backgrounds are respected and hold the school in high regard. Governors are fully committed to making sure that the school provides a good quality of education. They know the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve it further. “

Sandra Carter
Headteacher
Rainham Village Primary and Nursery

For more information please visit;
www.rainhamvillage.havering.sch.uk
Maldon Primary School is a larger than average primary school. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. A number of children are in the early stages of learning English and a small number of children come from traveller backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also above average.

Maldon Primary School is a vibrant, caring, fully inclusive community school. We have a great team of supportive staff who work very hard to inspire all of our children to succeed.

It is our aim that children leave Maldon Primary School equipped with the skills and attitudes to continue on their learning journey and have the emotional resilience to respond to whatever challenges they may face. To that end we offer a wide range of exciting and challenging learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

It hasn’t always been like that.

When I arrived in September 2010 the school had recently been inspected and had achieved a satisfactory rating under the old framework. It was a cosy school with a lovely community feel but standards could be much higher.

This Ofsted inspection offered a springboard for a complete overhaul of the work of the school with a major focus on universal provision in terms of quality first teaching.

The work also included significant staff restructuring, rewriting the curriculum to meet the needs of our learners and ensuring that appropriate and timely interventions were put in place for the children and families that needed them. It also involved working in collaboration with other successful schools.

A key strategy was seconding crucial staff members from other successful schools to boost the capacity for improvement until we were in a position to advertise substantive posts.

The successful recruitment of competent staff to key roles particularly the Deputy Head, School Business Manager and a Family Liaison Officer has led to significant improvements throughout the school enabling the senior leadership team to successfully build and embed distributive leadership.

A year of Centenary celebrations gave us the space and opportunity to rewrite our curriculum to meet the needs of our learners. Our curriculum focuses on basic skills, as much outdoor learning as possible, child led planning, practical maths and encourages creativity and thinking skills.
In addition the children were introduced to a set of learning behaviours based on the Growth mind-set work of Carol Dweck, encouraging children to believe that their basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. Teaching a growth mind-set creates motivation and productivity.

A more rigorous half termly system of tracking the performance of individual pupils where staff are held to account for the performance and achievement of all, enables us to consider each child as an individual and ensure that appropriate interventions, including those to respond to social and emotional needs are put into place, ensuring that all pupils make progress regardless of their starting points.

“Children have skills lower than those typical for their age when they join the school. They make good progress and reach the levels expected nationally as they move into year 1. They learn well in an environment of stimulating materials and teachers’ well-chosen methods. The children make the most of the opportunities that they get. They are encouraged to investigate for themselves in practical activities, and well-targeted questions help them to persevere in their learning for long periods without interruption.” Ofsted January 2013

A further key strategy is our extensive family learning programme which includes a variety of activities including Saturday workshops where parents are able to work alongside their children.

We were very proud to achieve an Ofsted grading of Good in January 2013. This reflected all of the hard work put in by all members of the team.

“Maldon is an improving school which has successfully resolved concerns raised at the previous inspection. Teaching is now consistently good and much is outstanding and is leading to pupils’ better achievement.”

Some other recent achievements that we are proud of include:

- June 2013 Inclusion Quality Mark – Outstanding
- Gold September 2013 Science Quality Mark –
- September 2013 Amongst the Most improved KS1 results in the county

Onwards and upwards to outstanding!
Katherine Semar Junior School

Preparing your child for the future

Katherine Semar Junior School is an average sized; two form entry community school, in the market town of Saffron Walden.

Currently, the school is full, giving us a roll of 240. We also have a waiting list. We share an attractive site with an Infant school. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is low, but many families are on low incomes.

The schools journey has been from: Serious Weakness (1998); Satisfactory (2006); Good with Outstanding features (2009) and Outstanding in all areas in 2013. Pupil numbers had been low for many years, whilst children were on waiting lists for the other schools.

Having served as Deputy Headteacher, Rachel Callaghan was appointed as Headteacher in 2005. The school was open plan, which had a detrimental effect on teaching and learning. The interior of the school was shabby and resources were extremely poor. Improvements needed to be made to the building, resources and to the progress and achievement for all pupils. A strength of the school was the implementation of wrap-around childcare, all year, at an affordable price.

In 2007 Anthony Hull was appointed Deputy Headteacher. Priorities at that time were to create an effective SLT that ensured strategic planning for the future; develop a robust behaviour policy that the whole school embraced and to build strong assessment procedures. We also wanted to make our curriculum more creative.

Our new behaviour policy had a profound impact on the school, with children learning the skills to become self-sufficient learners. It united the staff and set clear expectations and boundaries for all children. It changed the way children thought about learning as they started to view themselves as learners, rather than having teaching imposed upon them. The core elements remain the same to this day. Ofsted quote 2013 “Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are motivated, engaged and excited by their teachers. They thoroughly enjoy school and feel safe.”

The key factor to improving standards and ensuring achievement and progress of pupils was through rigorous assessment. The SLT monitored lessons, tracked planning and held pupil progress meetings to indentify pupils that would benefit from intervention programs. Staff were held to account for the performance and achievement of the pupils they taught through performance management. This became a central focus for the school.
As the opportunity to employ new staff arose, the SLT was strategic in employing staff that complemented and strengthened the team. In the three years leading to the 2013 OFSTED inspection, the focus was on bespoke CPD that supported the staff (for instance, all teachers had middle leadership training) Learning Support Staff have specialised to cover aspects of intervention support. Ofsted’s 2013 report recognised that “No groups of pupils underachieve.” The most able pupils started reaching the highest levels of which they were capable. Lessons were planned, starting with the highest ability groups. This developed a culture of high expectations for all.

As a starting point to developing a creative curriculum, an emphasis was placed on music and sport, areas that had been weak. We employed highly skilled specialist staff who became stakeholders in the school’s development. Through music and sports, the school began to take part in community events with successful outcomes. Parents became proud of the school as they saw their children develop and flourish. The reputation of the school grew dramatically over five years, with parents now choosing KSJ as their first choice.

With a determined drive for improvement in the Arts and sport, the pupil’s progress in core subjects inevitably followed. 2013 SATs results in English were:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Lvl 4+</th>
<th>Lvl 5</th>
<th>Lvl 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
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<td>11.4%</td>
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</table>

Our well rounded curriculum includes: weekly singing lessons, the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, a flourishing orchestra comprising of pupils, staff and parents. All children have swimming lessons throughout their whole time in school, resulting in children leaving the school with improved life experiences. There are two residential visits throughout their time at school. The school has been awarded Gold Arts Mark, won numerous sports competitions, including winning County Finals in Netball year on year.

The journey to the 2013 outstanding Ofsted judgement was achieved due to having a consistent, strong Senior Leadership Team, with distributed leadership and all staff buying into the vision of the school through engagement in the school development plan.

Pupils, parents and staff are proud of the school and its achievements and morale is high.

For more information please visit;

www.katherinesemar-jun.essex.sch.uk
Milton Hall is a larger than average primary school with 600 pupils on roll rising to 700 due to a recent expansion programme. We are a unique school situated by the coast in Westcliff on sea but nestled amongst tower blocks and poor housing in one of the most deprived areas in the county. With well above average FSM, EAL, SEN and pupil mobility the school is faced with many challenges. Currently 47 different languages are spoken and we have a large Czech Roma population.

Three years ago there were issues with behaviour, poor attendance, lack of parental support and community unrest. In addition to this the school had to cope with an historical ‘bad reputation’ which meant Milton Hall was not the school of choice for many parents.

How things have changed! For the first time ever Milton Hall is oversubscribed. Attendance is in line with the National Average and still improving, behaviour is exemplary and progress for all groups of pupils is good and for many outstanding! 2013 KS2 results saw 100% of core pupils (those with us from reception) make good progress with 70% making outstanding progress and, despite entering the school well below national expectations, 96% went on to achieve national expectations in reading with over half achieving the higher levels.

Our journey to success started with a rigorous monitoring process. Open, honest and sometimes difficult conversations were had to enable the SLT to develop a clear direction both strategically and logistically. Two key areas identified had the biggest impact; re-designing the curriculum and creating a real collaborative learning culture within the school.

Raising aspiration has always been at the heart of what we do, and enabling our pupils to be the very best they can be and experience success was a key driver on our road to school improvement. In an area of such high deprivation opportunities are limited. By putting music, drama, dance and digital technology at the heart, we provide these opportunities through an engaging, exciting, relevant curriculum accessible for all. Pupils regularly use IPads, photography, film and green screen technology to support, enhance and challenge their learning. The Media Suite and Music Studio are always buzzing and Milton Hall TV and Radio enable parents to interact with their children’s learning from home as well.
Our recent NACE Challenge Award report stated:

‘New technology is utilised to a high level by pupils to broaden learning opportunities – for example the everyday use of iPads in lessons which are becoming ‘invisible’ but highly effective as they enhance and personalise learning’

Creating a true collaborative learning culture started with the building of a shared vision for teaching and learning for the whole school community. The vision became the foundation for the new Teaching and Learning policy of which staff have full ownership. Designed, understood and implemented by them it has had a strong impact on standards. A whole school CPD programme devised and facilitated by the SLT started with the whole school community, teachers, support staff, governors and parents working together to ensure ‘buy in’ from all. Training sessions focussed on the Shirley Clarke approach to AFL supported further understanding of the whole school approach and its’ implementation.

Peer mentoring and the introduction of Learning Development Teams had a powerful impact on teachers’ own practice. This facilitated professional and productive dialogue, sharing of best practice and confidence to take more risks. Alongside this, visits and exchanges to outstanding schools were organised and teachers returned invigorated and motivated. The impact of this approach has been outstanding. Staff consistently have high expectations of all their pupils and a real ‘can do’ culture is evident. At the outset monitoring by SLT showed 52% of teaching to be consistently good. July 2013 saw this figure rise to 82% and in February 2014 100% of teachers have had a good or better judgement.

Milton Hall is now a true ‘Learning Community’, our pupils want to come to school, they want to learn and they (and their families) look to the future with excitement! Judged ‘Good’ by Ofsted we feel we offer ‘Outstanding’ opportunities for our pupils to be the best that they can be!

Debbie Priest, Headteacher
In July 2012, we had joined the “Achievement for All” programme as part of our drive for school improvement and we anticipated that the structured conversation part of this programme would be key to enhancing positive relationships between home and school and therefore raising standards. We also created a variety of other opportunities for parents to engage with our school:

- “Learning links” newsletter weekly;
- “Open Doors” every Tuesday after school;
- “Reading together” every Wednesday morning, 8.30-8.45;
- Join your child for lunch – twice per academic year for each class;
- “Time Together” – family learning opportunities led by parent support advisers.

All of these opportunities began in the Autumn Term 2012 and parents were asked for their opinions on them at the end of that term. The response was 100% positive. Parents were also asked about the possibility of setting up a Parent Forum and based on the positive response, this group started in January 2013.

“Reading Together” has been the most successful of all of the opportunities that we have created and at the request of parents now starts ten minutes earlier, at 8.20 a.m. I run this session in the school hall with an LSA and parents and children come to read together during this time. When we first started this in October 2012, 13 children attended with their parents and all children who attended received a sticker. In order to encourage greater participation and to raise the profile of reading, bookmarks with fluffy characters on were created. On the first day of the bookmarks, numbers rose to 45 children with their parents. These numbers continued to rise and by May 2013 there were consistently 80+ children each week.
For the academic year 2013-14, I organised a different “bug” for each week and created a display in the school hall to encourage the children to come along every week to collect each one. Since September 2013, numbers have been consistently 100+ children and their parents each week. We also give away pens with the school name and website on for parents to add comments into their child’s reading record book. The pens are as popular with parents as the bugs are with children!! Parents also appreciate being able to speak to me informally at this time.

From November 2012 to November 2013, we benefited from working with HMI. We focussed on engagement with parents alongside making improvements in teaching and learning and introducing a new approach to behaviour management. Our standards have risen as a result, with attainment at the end of KS1 in 2013 being above national in all areas:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>APS 2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>15.3</td>
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<td>Writing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>17.1</td>
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Our parent forum has continued to flourish and remains a solution focussed group that supports the drive for school improvement. We were inspected by Ofsted in January 2014 and judged as “good” in all areas with 92% of parents on Parent View saying that they would recommend this school to other parents.

We are very proud of our children and the success of our Ofsted inspection. In February 2014, Governors hosted a party for children and their parents to celebrate this success, and we gave out a new “bug” which simply states “This is a good school”.

For more information please visit; www.powershall-inf.co.uk

Claire Jaques
Headteacher
Ardleigh St. Mary’s

‘Where Learning Never Ends’

Ardleigh St. Mary’s is a smaller than average church school and is currently oversubscribed. It serves pupils from the village of Ardleigh and beyond, so a significant number travel some distance to the school. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. The school benefits from a supportive Friends Of Association who have raised significant funds over the years.

It is housed in a Victorian building which has been considerably refurbished and extended. There is also an extensive outside area: located behind the hall is a working garden including a 50ft polytunnel and a chicken enclosure. In addition to this there is also a well-used Forest School area on site. This summer, we were fortunate to have the addition of an outdoor timber built classroom and a stage area. There is also a school kitchen which provides freshly cooked nutritious food every day.

The school enjoys a vibrant partnership through the Diocese with St. Paul’s School in Kenya. Teacher exchange visits take place annually, helping to enrich the curriculum and encourage regular contact between pupils.

Before taking up the post of Headteacher in September 2007, it was made clear to me that in order for the school to make even better progress a radical change to the curriculum was required. All staff were keen to meet this challenge and engaged fully in the process of change.

We felt, as a school, that there were key elements to the curriculum that we are seeking to develop; flexibility, creativity, independent thinking, resilience and enjoyment of learning.

We began by adopting a whole school thematic approach to the curriculum with a product outcome as an end result. Long and medium term planning was modified. Staff responded well to the greater autonomy given them as part of this process. Outcomes typically involved festivals, open days and exhibitions with the pupils involved in the planning and organising of these events.

Underpinning the whole curriculum is a thinking skills approach based upon the work of Guy Claxton which had already been introduced but not fully developed across the school. Further staff training allowed this to be properly embedded in learning situations both inside and outside the classroom.

An important consequence was the creation of a stimulating outdoor environment. This has allowed us to develop high quality Forest School provision as well as an outdoor spiritual learning programme and parents frequently inform us that their children greatly enjoy these sessions. The vegetable garden has allowed the children to develop a greater awareness of where their food comes from which also complements our Healthy Schools Programme. Food grown in the garden is regularly used in our own school kitchen.

Following recommendations of a 2008 OFSTED inspection, the Early Years outdoor area was further enhanced to provide quality learning opportunities for our youngest pupils.

To broaden the children’s experiences even further, we developed an extensive sports programme with regular input from professional coaches. This has raised standards in PE and promoted competitive sports. The school is a member of the local sports association and takes every opportunity to participate in the competitions available.

There has been considerable financial investment in ICT, both in terms of equipment and training to develop staff expertise. This has helped us create a relevant curriculum fit for the 21st century.

Central to the school’s ethos is the spiritual and emotional well-being of every individual in the school community. We firmly believe the early recognition of children’s emotional needs are paramount to their success as learners. Children and adults have access to well-being mentors who offer tailored programmes of support.

Tracking and monitoring procedures were overhauled which led us to devising a more rigorous system. This has allowed the school to focus on improving the rate of pupils’ progress through high quality teaching. This has also enabled us to effectively deploy support staff throughout the school.

This work on our efforts to improve the curriculum was recognised in our last ofsted: ‘The school has developed an imaginative curriculum which is relevant to pupils’ needs and provides a good range of activities.... The broad range of experiences within the curriculum and contributes well to pupils’ achievements and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.’

We look forward to continuing to build on our successes and achievements so far with a curriculum that engages and excites our whole school community.

Donna Parker – Headteacher
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There has been considerable financial investment in ICT, both in terms of equipment and training to develop staff expertise. This has helped us create a relevant curriculum fit for the 21st century.

Central to the school’s ethos is the spiritual and emotional well-being of every individual in the school community. We firmly believe the early recognition of children’s emotional needs are paramount to their success as learners. Children and adults have access to well-being mentors who offer tailored programmes of support.
William Law C E Primary School is a larger than average Primary School with 630 pupils. We are a three-form entry school with 21 classes. The school is located in Werrington, Peterborough although 50% of the pupils are out-of-catchment. There are 27 first languages spoken at the school, 18% EAL and 11% FSM. We are a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. On the 1st May 2014, the school becomes an Academy which will give us more freedom to follow our own curriculum whilst also enabling us to take further control of our own budgets. This is an exciting time for the school.

We are proud of our excellent reputation and take time to care for each individual. Every child is tracked and the progress measured. If a child is not on-track, interventions are swiftly put into place so that children make good and outstanding progress. Lessons are carefully planned and our marking policy is a strength in order to take learning forward. The children also respond positively to the marking.

The school is particularly proud of its musical achievements with 130 pupils taking instrumental lessons. The school has an orchestra, two choirs and several music groups. The singing throughout the school resounds off the walls.

Sport is encouraged and we participate in much competitive sport with our football team doing particularly well. We consider that a strong partnership with parents to be a key factor in raising achievement. We engage parents with the pupils’ learning and they too want the best for their child. The governors monitor, challenge and support the school, frequently visiting to see for themselves what is going on in order to write their monitoring reports. Therefore they are very secure in their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Two years ago, the curriculum changed to a creative one. This has enabled the children to become even more engaged with their lessons. They can now see more clearly the links in their learning across all areas of the curriculum. The different themes start with ‘wow days’ and children are soon immersed in these topics. We know they are interested because much learning is carried out at home.

Children enjoy coming to school, arriving with smiles on their faces and eagerly look forward to their days. Their lessons are pacy and interesting. Teachers work hard and are, without exception, extremely committed to providing the best opportunities for learning. During our November 2013 Ofsted, inspectors noted that:
“Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and have good relationships with peers and adults. They learn through a wide range of subjects and the range of extra activities offered to them is extensive. Music is a strength.”

Across the academic year, there are visitors in school as well as trips and residential holidays, all of which enrich the curriculum. Many pupils are involved in Children’s University which aims to promote greater learning away from school. Every week there is something out-of-the-ordinary going on at William Law. We take a number of opportunities to be assessed externally. There is a drive for improvement and we currently hold the Silver RE Mark, the Governor Mark, the Enhanced Healthy Schools award, the Green Flag Eco School award and we are proud to have become the first school in the whole of Peterborough to be awarded full Fair Trade status. We have both an on-site Breakfast and an After-School Club which are able to cater for up to sixty children.

“William Law CE Primary School sustains an excellent learning environment, where pupils are proud to belong, feel valued and achieve highly.”

Visitors to the school frequently comment upon the friendly atmosphere within the school. We celebrate our successes and continually strive to be outstanding in every area of school life.

Tracey Cunningham
Headteacher
William Law CE Primary School
Twelvetree Avenue
Werrington
Peterborough, PE4 5DT

For more information please visit: www.williamlawceschool.co.uk

In the recent Church of England Inspection, the school was rated outstanding in all four categories which included the impact of collective worship upon the school community, the effectiveness of the religious education, the effectiveness of the leadership and management and the distinctive Christian character of the school. The Inspector summarised this by stating:
This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
Parklands Infants School is a group 3 school with 420 children on roll. This includes 60 nursery children. The children come from a variety of backgrounds and live primarily in the local area. Some children live further afield. The majority of children are from white British families however the number of children from other ethnic backgrounds is increasing. The proportion claiming free school meals is below average however our children with SEN are above average. Visitors always comment on the happy, positive and inclusive ethos of the school.

The school is situated in an urban area and has very little outdoor space which has been developed into different learning areas for each year group. We are a recognised Forest School with accredited leaders on the staff and have a designated site within Hainault Forest. Blocks of sessions are planned to enable the classes to develop and enhance their thematic learning in a forest environment.

Attainment on entry to the school is below the national average particularly in communication, language and literacy. By the end of year two the outcomes show that we are consistently above national and local averages in these areas.

The flexible, thematic, skills based curriculum enables learning that is both meaningful and purposeful. To ensure that learning is fun and memorable all themes begin with a ‘Stunning Start,’ have a ‘Marvellous Middle’ and end with a ‘Fabulous Finish!’ This allows for deep learning which is vibrant, enjoyable and engaging.

We are proud of the achievement of all our learners in school. We are particularly pleased with the achievements in writing which encompasses the whole curriculum.

Writing throughout the school is based on first hand experiences, writing for a purpose and real audiences. Opportunities for, ‘Talk for Writing,’ give children the confidence to explore their ideas orally through engagement in activities such as role play, drama, use of the outdoors and visits such as shopping trips.

Non-negotiables for writing include the teaching of cursive hand writing, phonic, grammatical and spelling strategies, purposes for writing and exposure to a wide range of texts. These are the skills which the children are then able to use and apply in their writing. Throughout all their writing activities the children are encouraged to, ’Have a Go’ and to show pride in their achievements.

Displays including books, throughout the school reflect the value and importance placed on children’s writing as an effective form of communication and creativity which is shared by all those who visit the school including parents and carers.

Writing is an essential skill and tool for now and the future. Our challenge is to ensure that the curriculum we provide meets the needs and feeds the enthusiasm of our children.

Head Teacher Margy Bushell
DHT Linda Smith
Mathew Read, Principal Oriel Academy, West London, an Aspirations Academy.

Oriel is larger than the average primary school serving a challenging and changing community. We are, in September 2013, a thriving school with a growing roll and a real energy and excitement about what the future holds for us.

But this has not always been the case. In 2008 when I was appointed as Headteacher of Oriel, the roll was falling, the building was in poor condition, behaviour in school was a concern, results had been slipping for some time and parents were voting with their feet. It was not a happy place.

The first thing we had to do was stop the rot. In the case of the building, I mean this literally. We prioritised redecorating the classrooms and creating spaces that the children found inviting and safe. We wanted to show our pupils that they mattered and the environment we provided reflected this. We worked on making the playground more exciting and fun.

At the same time we introduced new school values and expectations for pupils, parents and staff. Key to this was introducing rigorous monitoring of planning, children’s work and regular developmental lesson observations. The latter we linked to performance management and a new level of challenge for teachers. Some staff found this hard, many thrived.

The most important change we made however was to tracking pupil progress and target setting. We introduced a culture of assessment that meant for the first time that teachers and senior leaders could effectively discuss pupils’ needs and target resources accordingly. Within a year our results began to improve and the community began to see a difference. In June 2009 OFSTED judged us to be a good school. We began to be able to attract and recruit new stronger teachers.

But this has not been a seamless journey. In March 2012 despite steadily improving results at the end of each key stage we were issued a ‘Notice to Improve’; because the improvements we had made were not consistently embedded in all year groups. Furthermore, somewhere along the way we had missed a change in our community. Parents, rightly, now expected even more from us and told OFSTED as much. We

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had to listen more closely to our community and to improve our communications and with support from our LA we did. We set up improved home school communications, better systems for listening to our pupils and a stronger more effective School Council.

We very quickly moved to support staff to eradicate the inconsistencies in practice that remained. We worked really hard and despite the challenge and disappointment we faced, we stuck together as a staff and a community and resolved to improve. We tightened our systems for assessment, tracking, target setting but most importantly monitoring and evaluation. Pupil progress meetings became even tighter. Our drive to improve was relentless; there was nowhere to hide and no excuses.

We continued to develop high expectations for all our pupils, expecting them to behave well and to work hard. We worked to provide a school environment that inspired pupils to become confident individuals and to develop as independent learners and where teaching was never less than good. We tried to ensure that our pupils, parents and staff had a sense of pride in belonging to Oriel.

In June 2013 Oriel was re-inspected by OFSTED and judged once again to be a ‘good school’. Our results in all key stages are above national average, having been steadily improving for the last four years.

As a result of the tracking and monitoring we now offer more personalised, innovative and exciting opportunities that enable our pupils to achieve their very best regardless of their backgrounds. We work hard to foster our pupils’ unique abilities, to celebrate their successes and achievements.

But we have also learnt a valuable lesson. While we had come a long way on our own, the energy required to sustain the improvements we had made was a real challenge.

For the future we recognise that in order to have a greater chance of going on to becoming an outstanding school we have to work as part of an effective partnership. It is on this foundation that we started the new school year by becoming part of the Aspirations Academies Trust. Joining a family of schools that offers many new opportunities that will enrich our children’s education over the coming years and will help the school go on from being ‘good’ to become a truly ‘Outstanding’ academy!
UPTON CROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Upton Cross is a much larger than average 1.5 growing to 5 form entry Nursery and Primary school, organised across two sites situated in neighbouring wards of the London Borough of Newham. The majority of children come from a variety of housing situated in the local area; this includes privately owned houses, rented housing and temporary accommodation. Whilst the majority of our Reception children at our established site have come from our Nursery, our Reception intake on the new site has come from over 25 different Early Years settings with many having had no prior educational experience. 94.6% of our intake speak English as an additional language and are, therefore, from ethnic minority groups. There is also a marked difference in the number of languages represented within the cohort across our two sites, as our 122 children on the new site speak almost 30 languages including some complex mixes (e.g. Bengali Dutch) and our pupil stability at 81.3% although broadly in line with the national average is felt more acutely on our new site where families travel from across and beyond the local authority.

Almost a fifth of our children are entitled to free school meals, this along with above average figures for over-crowded households and a low number of adults in higher education explains our social deprivation figure at approximately double the national average.

When I arrived as Head Teacher at Upton Cross in January 2007, the school appeared very ‘safe’ and teacher-led. At the time, attainment and progress were well below both local and national averages and the issues identified during the previous OfSTED inspection around teaching lacking pace and challenge, unfocused pupil tracking and school development planning were not only still apparent but appeared to have intensified having a highly detrimental impact on achievement across the school. At this point results were projected to fall sharply over the next two years, falling well below floor targets.

**Our journey to outstanding**

As a school we went ‘back to basics’ in that we re-introduced the ‘Assessment for Learning’ framework, developed a default position for teaching that promoted pupil Excitement, Pace, Involvement and Challenge (referred to as EPIC teaching) and set non-negotiables around the flexible and quality use of additional adults in the classroom. Alongside this work, staff were supported in making more frequent and accurate assessment judgements on their pupils, these judgements were routinely moderated by leaders at all levels and use was made of a more advanced on-line data management system that allowed more complex analysis of groups within the school.

During this time, while school systems were overhauled to ensure they could provide the evidence we needed to measure the impact of our work. Most notable we adapted systems for;

- monitoring and evaluation to take into account a wider range of evidence sources (pupil work, teacher’s planning, learning environments and pupil voice) and to involve leaders at all levels;
- blocked professional development to focus more on pedagogy than on policy and procedure and rooted firmly in outcomes from whole school monitoring;
- performance management with targets linked to whole school development;
- skilling up middle leaders through professional development and coaching and mentoring to increase responsibility for whole-school improvement;
- ensuring governors were given training and quality, well organised information to allow them to challenge and support effectively and;
- supporting families through formal and informal systems to develop their own skill set as well as deepening their understanding and familiarity of the pedagogy developed at school.

With this work embedding, outcomes first met local averages before going onto meet and exceed national averages. This trend was not just seen in Years 2
and 6 but seen across the school from early years. Finally in November 2008, I experienced my first OISTED as a Head Teacher. The school was judged as ‘Outstanding’ in each area stating:

‘Upton Cross is an outstanding school. Excellent leadership from the Head Teacher and his very capable senior team is driving up standards at all levels. Success has had a considerable impact on pupils’ attitudes to learning, their personal development, and the quality of teaching … The senior leadership team shows a dogged determination to raise standards, backed by a clear shared vision of how this is to be done.’

Continuing the journey

In the 4 ½ year period between our first and second inspection, the school’s context changed completely in that we began our expansion from 1.5 forms of entry on one site to 5 forms of entry over two sites. With this swift and complex expansion came rapid growth in staff numbers as well as significant changes to the communities served by each of our sites. In order to maintain the momentum of school improvement, induct large numbers of new staff quickly as well as continuing to develop our established staff team we had to personalise our approaches to school improvement through greater use of;

- coaching and mentoring for all staff to develop shared problem solving and interdependence;
- differentiated professional development and monitoring to support and challenge staff at all levels and;
- practitioner research to promote discourse that informs school improvement, professional development and performance management.

During the same time period we have experienced substantial national changes in the role of the local authority, the inspection and accountability framework, the testing regime, curriculum requirements and routes into initial teacher training to name but a few. To manage this complex change the importance of collaboration is crucial. Ways in which we have engaged in collaboration includes;

- work as a National Support School deploying NLEs and SLEs to nearby schools;
- partnership with two successful Teaching Schools;
- active participation in a local network (originally a Soft Federation that developed into a registered charity) and;
- contributing to the setting up of a local mutual organisation formed by local schools to run and commission services to schools locally and further afield.

Our second full inspection took place at the end of last term. Once again inspectors judged the school as ‘Outstanding’ in all areas stating;

‘Leadership is outstanding. School leaders are highly supportive of the vision to continually improve and are inspiring role models around the school. Staff support for the Head Teacher has helped to sustain high standards across the school.’

Our journey at Upton Cross has been exciting and varied. With a complex and ever changing context, I believe the area of our work that has made the biggest difference is the systems by which we assess exactly where a child is at. From this information, staff, at all levels, are able to identify and address needs quickly so that each child progresses, ‘gaps’ are closed and additional interventions are planned where appropriate. Through a focus on ‘Assessment for Learning’ and ‘Accelerated Learning’ strategies we strive to provide our children with a hunger for learning and improvement and our parents, carers and community with support at knowing what will support their children in their next steps on their educational journey.

As a result, the vast majority of children move quickly through the intervention systems and catch up with their peers. In addition, children are more comfortable in discussing what they are learning, the strategies they might employ, the benefits of what they are learning and indicators of their success. As a school, we place a real emphasis on this as we believe that empowering the children to become successful learners is a vital part of our job.
Uxendon Manor Primary School is a two form entry school with a nursery in the London Borough of Brent, in the North-West of London. We are a multi-cultural school with a high percentage of children who speak English as an additional language and where 23 different languages are spoken. We have been on quite a journey over the last four years…

I took up the role of Headteacher of Uxendon Manor, my first Headship, in September 2009. Having been born, brought up and educated in Brent, I was passionate about the local area and looking forward to the exciting and challenging times ahead.

The immediate priority that we identified was to improve the behaviour and attendance of the children. The staff got behind me and by being consistent, working closely with parents and developing new policies and procedures, behaviour and attendance started to improve. Attendance rose from 91.8% to 95.4% over the four years. Our high expectations of children’s behaviour saw an improvement from 35 fixed term exclusions in 2008-9 to none at all for the last two years.

We needed to monitor, track and analyse children’s progress more thoroughly and accurately and introduced new data systems and rigorous half termly pupil progress meetings. We tried to strike a balance between setting challenging targets and increasing accountability for staff as well as offering support, guidance and interventions where appropriate. The impact of these meetings has been illustrated in the impressive progress that the children have made. In both 2011 and 2012 the school has been in the top 3 percentile rank for progress in English and Maths over Key Stage 2.

The appointment of Jashu Vekaria, an Advanced Skills Teacher, in 2010 was an important one. Jashu led on teaching for learning and introduced team teaching, peer observations, seminar lessons, coaching and high quality staff training. The teachers worked extremely hard and the quality of teaching improved significantly. Jashu became the Deputy Headteacher in September 2012.

We made several other staff appointments including a new Assistant Headteacher, EYFS leader and some talented NQTs. We put a lot of time and effort into the recruitment process and feel that this has paid off as the new staff members have considerably helped to strengthen our team.
Uxendon Manor’s Journey…

By Jon Parry, Headteacher

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We made several other staff appointments in including a new Assistant Headteacher, EYFS leader and some talented NQTs. We put a lot of time and effort into the recruitment process and feel that this has paid off as the new staff members have considerably helped to strengthen our team.

Standards of attainment have risen significantly across the school. For the first time in the school’s history, we achieved Key Stage 2 Sats results over 90% in 2012 and again in 2013. Our percentage of children achieving level 4+ in English and Maths combined was 64% in 2010. This had risen to 76% in 2011 and 93% in 2012. Our Maths results were 95% level 4+ with 48% level 5 in 2012 and 2013. 15% of children in 2012 and 22% in 2013 achieved level 6 in Maths in 2013.

The values and vision of the school are communicated regularly to the school community. We have done a lot of work with our children on developing a ‘Growth Mindset’ and the importance of showing resilience and perseverance with their learning. ‘We roll up our sleeves’ is one of key values.

Our belief in truly developing the ‘whole child’ and the benefits of this have been reflected in many ways from the improved standards of achievement to the impressive range of extra-curricular activities and enriched and engaging curriculum that the children receive – from the swimming lessons that start at the age of 3 in the Nursery to ‘Gifted and Talented’ research projects at the Wembley Stadium Learning Zone. This was commented on recently by a delegation of thirty Headteachers and education officers from Vietnam who visited us through the British Council – they said that they were ‘moved’ and ‘inspired’ by our ‘Creative Curriculum’.

We were judged to be ‘good’ by Ofsted in a music subject inspection in June 2012 and were included in an Ofsted report titled ‘Sound Partnerships’, and then received a ‘good’ grading in our full inspection in July 2013. We have been very pleased with the progress that we have made and we have received many positive comments from visitors to our school. But there is so much more that we have to do. Onwards and upwards!

For more information visit;
www.uxendonmanor.com
Ellingham Primary School

An Olympic Effort.

Ellingham is a popular primary school which is undergoing expansion to become a two form entry school, with a Nursery, by 2017-18. Senior leaders took up their new posts in September 2011 knowing that: Key Stage 2 results had dipped for the previous two years; there was a major rebuilding project underway and Ofsted inspectors were due.

We embraced key messages from the Department For Education’s document ‘Making Great Progress’ and used these to inform initial decisions and changes.

The inspection took place four weeks into the academic year and resulted in a satisfactory grading, with an acknowledgement that, ‘The new leadership team has made rapid progress in implementing necessary changes’ but that these had not yet been embedded.

Ofsted returned in Autumn 2013 - this time only three weeks into the new academic year! We were delighted that, not only was the school graded as good in all areas, but recognition was given to the journey that we have been on so far and the progress we are already making towards becoming an outstanding school.

Team Ellingham

Prior to starting her new post, the Headteacher, Mrs Sarah Creegan, had heard a speaker at an Inside Government event say that, ‘Good things aren’t worth it, if important things don’t happen.’

Taking this on board, during our first few weeks together, children, staff, governors and parents worked to develop a shared vision and values, while reminding ourselves of the school’s core purpose. The aim of this was for everyone to recognise the difference that they could make, both personally and collectively, in developing children’s basic skills, accelerating their progress and ensuring high attainment within a no excuses, yet supportive culture.

‘Staff are extremely mindful of the school’s vision and are very committed to improving the pupils’ achievement’ Ofsted 2013.

Inspiring a Generation

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Inspiring a Generation

The school began its journey of improvement during the build-up to London 2012 and we adopted the Olympic and Paralympic values alongside embedding Learning to Learn skills. Following many Olympic themed activities we were delighted when Beth Tweddle, MBE, triple World Gymnastics Champion and Olympic bronze medalist, agreed to perform the official opening of the new school building.

An inspirational speaker, Beth talked to us about the importance of making mistakes and learning from them; taking responsibility for your own performance and striving for excellence. She continues to be quoted regularly, in lessons and assemblies.

In 2011, senior leaders introduced a new reward scheme, which places great emphasis on learning behaviours and resilience in particular. Children know that getting a page of sums correct is unlikely to earn them a reward and so they strive to challenge themselves with trickier problems in order to achieve bronze, silver and gold stars and certificates. In particular, this has supported the more able, who had traditionally ‘crumbled’ when the going got tough.

‘Activities based upon the Olympics and Paralympics helped bring learning to life.’ Ofsted 2013

Better Never Stops

In appraisal, progress and conferencing meetings all staff and pupils agree to aspirational targets which they are held accountable for, within a realistic ethos. We have not, and will not, let Performance Related Pay breed an over-cautious approach to the setting of teachers’ targets.

A whole school target, for the past two years, has been to ensure that 100% of lessons are good or better. The head and deputy initially took responsibility for driving up standards in teaching and learning and, in order that they did not ‘take their eye off the ball’, the Assistant Head/Business Manager assumed much of the responsibility for the building project.

When recruiting, applicants who have delivered the most successful lessons and interviews, and shown that they would fit in well with the existing team, have been Newly Qualified Teachers. As a result we are ‘growing our own’ outstanding teachers and future leaders.

We have stood firm on the introduction of new initiatives, ensuring that we only undertake projects that are fit for our purpose. The literacy leader has very successfully embedded Talk for Writing throughout the school and, as a result, ‘Pupils’ achievement in writing has improved since the last inspection, so they write confidently and with flair.’ Ofsted 2013

Continuing to Strive for Gold

As the Olympic and Paralympic athletes prepare for Rio in 2016, Team Ellingham has already begun its exciting journey to becoming an outstanding school. Watch this space!

For more information visit;

www.ellinghamschool.co.uk
Griffin Primary School is a larger than average community school with nearly 400 pupils. The school is based in the heart of the Patmore Estate in Battersea SW8 - an area of very high socio-economic and urban deprivation, bordering the Nine Elm development. The current Headteacher has been in post since September 2011.

The school was judged to be Satisfactory overall by Ofsted in December 2011 and 5 terms later in October 2013 as Outstanding in every aspect. At the time of the first inspection, there were a number of key issues such as achievement, quality of teaching, poor attendance and behaviour, inconsistencies in staffing and a falling pupil roll. Morale was low - there had been 3 headteachers in as many years.

It was essential to build a Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body whose prime focus from the outset was to rapidly improve the quality of teaching, accelerate rates of progress for pupils across the school and develop the capacity of middle leaders. Much needed work on the learning environment and raising the expectations of what pupils could achieve was essential in building the morale of pupils and staff. Outstanding teachers were recruited who excelled at delivering personalised learning for pupils and programmes of professional development tailored to the needs of individual teachers was put in place and continues so that teaching staff are well supported in improving their practice. The introduction of robust systems throughout the school were designed to build profiles of ‘teaching over time’ based on a broad range of evidence, including observations, quality of marking, rates of pupil progress in English and Maths clearly linked to the Ofsted framework and performance management arrangements. Governors aligned their focus on the key areas of school improvement and pupil achievement so that the relentless drive of holding teachers and leaders at all levels to account has resulted in pupils now making the progress they are capable of.

Previous historical weak teaching had resulted in many children including those with SEN and those eligible for free school meals not making enough progress and were underperforming. Using the Pupil Premium funding to provide high quality interventions were closely tracked and monitored to ensure that these children made accelerated progress.

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Restructuring opportunities were used regularly to enable staff to be better aligned to the needs of pupils. The introduction of new roles and services such as an Outreach Services Manager who provides support to families across the school with a focus on improving attendance, Kids Company and interventions provided by specialists or high performing teachers have resulted in pupils getting the help they need in order to succeed and do well at school. Using the Inclusion Quality Mark and rewriting the Inclusion Policy provided a framework for school improvement and was key to improving this aspect of the school’s provision.

High achievement does not have to come at the cost of a very broad and balanced curriculum. Given the context of the school, it was imperative to build a curriculum which was exciting and would provide the pupils with opportunities to engage with the wider community and learning outdoors. As the children live primarily on the local estate, and opportunities for families to engage beyond this can be financially limiting, the curriculum and site are being developed to promote high quality and enriching learning experiences across the curriculum. Specialist teachers in Art, Music & PE teach across the school and all children learn a musical instrument in KS2. Partnerships with key organisations such as the National Theatre, Royal Academy of Dance and taking advantage of the rich opportunities that London has to offer is important in raising the aspirations of pupils at the school.

Underpinning the school ethos is the firm belief that all children will fulfil their potential and given that they have one education - this deserves to be the very best. The Governing Body took the strategic lead on consulting with the whole school community on creating a vision statement, new school uniform and re-naming the school. Griffins were the mythical ‘guardian’s of priceless treasures’. This is precisely how valuable the pupils are and the privileged position adults have in guarding them and their education.

For more information please visit: www.griffinprimary.org.uk
Ranelagh Primary School

Ranelagh Primary School is in Newham in East London. We are a large Primary school with approximately 500 pupils on roll. Our pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds; just over 60% of our pupils speak English as an additional language with no dominant language, there are currently 50 different languages spoken by pupils.

We are in the highest 20% of schools with pupils deemed to be from disadvantaged backgrounds nationally.

I was appointed as head teacher in 2000 and have worked with a number of highly skilled staff and leadership teams all of whom have worked hard to give Ranelagh pupils the best possible opportunities.

Our journey has not been a straightforward one and although since 2001 we have been generally consistent in our progress there have been periods when the school has become fragile.

A number of significant staff changes at senior and middle leadership level in 2010 meant that the school went through a very difficult stage. It highlighted the importance of having a strong staff team.

After a year of staff promotions outside of the school, relocations and maternity leave for staff at a senior level we were left almost in the position of starting again. The staff changes and short period of instability also negatively impacted on our capacity to put in the necessary extra support for pupils and although our results remained above the floor targets and ‘broadly average’, pupils did not make enough progress.

We soon were back on track with new appointments from both outside the school and from within the staff team but the changes were not sufficiently embedded to satisfy Ofsted when they visited in November 2011 as many of the subject co-coordinators were new in post. The school was judged to be only satisfactory.

Since that inspection we have moved forward taking on board ideas and suggestions from other schools but more significantly by focusing on building capacity focusing on our staff teams and our strengths.

“The curriculum is a key strength of the school and is exceptionally well planned and organised by all teachers. Pupils deepen their knowledge through activities that develop teamwork, imagination, and learning about the world they live in”.

Ofsted November 2013
At Ranelagh we have always strived to offer opportunities and experiences that would not normally be attributed to a state school whilst still maintaining the highest possible standards in English and Maths. Community is at the heart of our school and we embrace all children within our totally inclusive environment. This is what is special about Ranelagh.

We ensure that our curriculum embraces sport and the arts, has an international perspective and is supported by a wide range of educational visits and opportunities whilst maintaining a necessary rigour and opportunity for developing basic skills. Our Comenius projects and international links have resulted in pupil visits to Romania, Spain and Germany. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play a tuned instrument and we stage a school production each year in a professional theatre. Our visits and visitors are varied and inspiring and enhance children’s learning.

The focus has been to promote high expectations across the whole of the curriculum whilst ensuring opportunities for English and maths in all subjects. We ensure consistency of provision through rigorous monitoring and quality feedback at all levels. Staff are reflective and receptive to improving their skills.

Subject co-ordinators are now well established and all, “staff are supported to perform at their best”. (Ofsted November 2013) Pupil progress is a key indicator of this.

In 2012 Ranelagh formed a soft federation with Rebecca Cheetham Nursery and Children’s Centre and as a result the staff structure at Ranelagh has changed and the opportunity for collaborative work has increased. As a leadership team we have become more strategic and we have focused on developing and empowering staff and ensuring that we have the capacity to withstand future changes and embrace new initiatives.

The importance of a strong focused hardworking team sharing core values and beliefs cannot be underestimated and with a head of school and leadership team and a staff at every level committed to high expectations and high standards, Ranelagh School will continue to move forward providing the best outcomes for pupils.

For more information please visit;

www.ranelagh.newham.sch.uk
**MANORFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**OUTSTANDING FROM SPECIAL MEASURES IN 16 MONTHS!**

Manorfield Primary school has gone from special measures in Feb 2012 to outstanding in July 2013! A remarkable achievement by the school considering Ofsted’s previous findings. This school is now an outstanding school.

Manorfield is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The school is expanding by September 2014, the school expects to have a three-form entry. The school has a nursery, with children attending the morning or afternoon sessions, and some are there all day. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, for pupils eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is much higher than that found nationally, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school serves a diverse population, with the largest ethnic groups being of Bangladeshi and White British heritage. The school’s 2012 national test results met the government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils’ attainment and progress. When the school was inspected in February 2012, it was judged to require special measures. Inspectors made monitoring visits in November and June 2012, and in February and July 2013, to evaluate the school’s progress. There have been a few staff changes since the previous inspection. The headteacher was initially contracted as executive headteacher in March 2012 before being appointed permanently in January 2013.

Head teacher Wendy Hick described the turnaround as “amazing” to the BBC.

Ms Hick, a former school-improvement consultant and head of a nearby school, was asked by the local authority, Tower Hamlets, to step in to help Manorfield after it was declared inadequate and placed in special measures in February 2012.

Wendy Hick, very well supported by leaders at all levels and staff, is an exceptional leader. She has high expectations of staff that all pupils will achieve their full potential. The Staff have responded well to the vision of high expectations, which leads to pupils making rapid progress as they move through the school.

The quality of leadership and management at all levels is outstanding. Leaders use robust systems to monitor teaching, and professional development is used very well to support and develop staff. All pupils at Manorfield meet the standard expected nationally, particularly in writing and mathematics. Most pupils exceed their targets, with a few excelling in mathematics.
Manorfield’s Curriculum

At Manorfield we aim to develop a lifelong love of learning in all of our children, by providing them with a rich, engaging and challenging curriculum. In the 21st century technology is changing rapidly and therefore some of the jobs our children will be doing do not exist yet. In order to equip our children for this future we are committed to developing their thinking skills, communication skills, research skills and social skills through a themed curriculum.

Our three themes this year are:

Autumn Term - Another World

Spring Term - Green

Summer Term - How we live

The themes are taught throughout the school from Nursery to Year 6 but look very different in each Year group. Our teachers plan the learning around the theme and where appropriate cover different curriculum areas. Our themes are broad so the teachers are able to adapt the learning to suit the needs of their class. Each teacher has a set of skills and objectives linked to a curriculum area that the children need to achieve throughout the year but they have control over the order that these objectives are taught. Children are encouraged to pose questions and develop research skills in order to become independent learners.

Our Commitment to Improving Literacy

Manorfields children go home talking excitedly about the book they are reading in class. Much of our Literacy is now based around a quality novel or a key text and this book links to the theme where possible. If children are excited about a text, our parents discuss it, participate in drama about the book, create art work and keep a journal about it then the children will be inspired to raise the quality of their own reading and writing.

Highly effective teaching is a major contributory factor to pupils achieving outstanding in such a short space of time. Teachers are innovative and knowledgeable. Pupils’ behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary due to an effective curriculum. They are keen to learn and work very well together. The governing body is imposing; their no-nonsense approach ensures that every aspect of the school’s work is kept under review. They know the school very well. The school does not stand still. Improvement is not temporary; it is continuous and robust systems are used to review progress. Leaders are determined to ensure that pupils can make faster progress in their reading.

2013 KS2 Performance Tables last update

Year on year comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England - All Schools</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
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</tbody>
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Head Teacher – Wendy Hick
Queenswell Junior School is a community school in Whetstone, North London sharing its extensive site with an Infant & Nursery School. I was appointed as Headteacher in January 2007.

Over a number of years, the school has had a fluctuating role in terms of numbers and its profile. The school used to be next to army barracks with up to 25% of children coming from service families; however, the barracks closed several years ago and the school has had to adapt to a changing demographic and numbers. The number of children with free school meals and English As An Additional Language has increased, which has provided us with challenges although the substantial Pupil Premium money has helped to ensure the best outcomes for these pupils. EAL children achieve as well as their peers and Pupil Premium children are mostly achieving better; there is no ‘gap’ between our learners.

After being a Headteacher of a school that went through two satisfactory inspections and standards that were broadly average, I decided that I needed to change our focus. The ‘light bulb’ moment was seeing another school embrace a fully creative curriculum and deciding this is what we needed to do to engage learners and teachers.

Our ‘Learning Journey’ is based on six core units all underpinned by National Curriculum skills. One unit is chosen by the children through discussion with the teacher. We have had choices such as ‘Chocolate’ and ‘Frozen Planet’. From this the teacher, using the National Curriculum skills and programmes of study, adapts the topic accordingly to ensure appropriate links with Literacy, Humanities, ICT and the Arts. We recently attained the ArtsMark in recognition for our creativity.

The other Learning Journeys include a teacher choice, a book focus, two humanities units based on the National Curriculum programmes of study and one whole school focus, which have included Film and Shakespeare. Alongside these we have special weeks and days to broaden the curriculum such as Environment Day, Healthy Week and International Day.

We wanted to ensure our teachers have the freedom to teach and the enthusiasm to learn alongside their children; therefore, we removed the need for meticulous plans and schemes of work and instead focus on the needs of the class based on assessment data both at the formative and summative level. Teachers have more time to focus on the engagement of learners through exciting creative linked activities, using individual and group guidance to move children forward.
When I first arrived at the school, behaviour was an issue. Staff were mostly concerned about the behaviour and attitudes of the children, rather than the learning. Through changing our behaviour systems, we have children who are responsible for their behaviour and learning and are enthusiastic about what they do – they are proud of their school! The Learning Journey has helped substantially with this as our children focus on one area for a block of time, thus developing their skills through contexts that they know and care about.

We revamped our tracking and assessment systems so they became shared and owned by all the staff rather than a remote paperwork exercise. Children in all year groups are set challenging targets and are encouraged to meet them. The Pupil Premium has allowed us to build up a whole school intervention strategy based on tracking data to ensure that children who are at risk of underachieving receive additional 1:1 support based on their needs. This is undertaken by experienced teachers and High Level Teaching Assistants and includes support for individual reading and maths alongside support for EAL children and new arrivals – our school mobility is relatively high. We also support our potential level 6 learners through 1:1 intervention, group work and support from a feeder secondary school. Our HLTAs also provide cover as required, therefore negating the need for supply teachers and giving us greater control on our budget.

Through hard work and dedication from the entire staff working alongside happy and interested children, we now have a ‘good’ school with rising levels of attainment and progress. We believe in our children; our children trust us. On a personal note, I love this school – everyday is a pleasure with new challenges all the time!

Spencer Clayton March 2014

For more information visit; www.queenswelljunior.co.uk
Dewhurst St Mary C of E is a smaller than average-sized primary school in south east Hertfordshire on the outskirts of London. 75% of pupils are White British with other pupils coming from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, although those at school action plus or with a statement of need is well below average. The school has experienced a significant increase in pupils eligible for pupil premium, with 41% currently receiving funding for additional support.

The Ofsted inspection in January 2011 judged the school to be satisfactory highlighting the need to improve: use of AfL, feedback marking, lesson pitch and challenge and monitoring procedures.

Following my appointment in April 2011 the school improvement plan has focused on raising standards and increasing parental engagement to support pupils learning. The newly formed leadership team implemented a rigorous and robust monitoring and evaluation schedule which identified that an effective system for tracking attainment and progress was required. Assessment Manager 7 was installed and staff and governors were trained in analysing class and whole school data. This was then used as a basis for discussion in termly pupil progress meetings between class teachers and the Senior Leadership team. This also fed into staff appraisals for Teachers and Teaching Assistants to identify staff development and training and was instrumental in measuring the impact of interventions and initiatives.

Our children needed to acquire better reading, writing and numeracy skills earlier, so a focus was placed on phonics teaching in KS1 with additional whole class teaching taking place in the afternoons alongside the phased sessions delivered in the mornings. Lexia, a personalised and progressive computer reading programme was purchased to be used with underachieving pupils. Pupils accessed the resource at home and during dedicated time before and during school. Their accelerated progress and positive feedback from pupils, parents and staff led us to increase our licences to include all pupils. The children’s enjoyment has meant the success is sustained.

Implementing ‘Big Write’ provided the opportunity for Staff CPD on increasing the use of effective assessment for learning strategies, to be put in practice. Pupils are empowered to evaluate and check their own work against the success criteria and to collaboratively ‘up level’ pieces of work using the power features (VCOP). Teachers regularly mark, assess and provide feedback to pupils by identifying small next steps using the ‘criterion scale’. Regular modelling of high quality writing by teachers has also been very effective in developing pupils ability to make appropriate language choices in their writing and develop a well-managed writing ‘voice’ based on the key principle of the strategy; ‘If a child can’t say it, they can’t write it.’
Leadership team. This also fed into staff meetings between class teachers and the Senior Assessment Manager. It was installed and staff tracking attainment and progress was required. This was then used as a basis for discussion in termly pupil progress and whole school data.

Following my appointment in April 2011 the pitch and challenge and monitoring procedures were put in place. Pupils are empowered to evaluate and check their own work against the success criteria and to collaboratively ‘up level’ their learning. The newly formed robust monitoring and evaluation schedule is crucial to have parental support and this has been achieved by running a number of practical workshops involving the parents and their children. We had to be creative to increase attendance of parents at these events and so ran small ‘bite size’ workshops at home time asking parents to ‘collect’ their child at the meeting, to minimise eating into their busy lives.

With all of our successful strategies it has been crucial to have parental support and this has been achieved by running a number of practical workshops involving the parents and their children. We had to be creative to increase attendance of parents at these events and so ran small ‘bite size’ workshops at home time asking parents to ‘collect’ their child at the meeting, to minimise eating into their busy lives.

Over the last 3 years there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils on track and making better than expected progress by Year 6. Current data shows the school has been successful in narrowing the gap for pupil premium children.

Raised achievement was confirmed at the Ofsted inspection in July 2013 when the school was judged to be ‘Good’. It was acknowledged that pupils were enthusiastic learners and their attitudes and behaviour were exemplary. It was reported that standards had been raised, gaps had been narrowed and teaching had been improved by the strong leadership of the SLT, other key leaders, governors and the local authority, all making a valuable contribution to improving the school. As a school we feel that the supportive whole school team approach to everything has been at the root of our success.

Pacy and multi-stranded oral mental starters were introduced by the Numeracy coordinator to support pupils in acquiring better mental strategies for use in all areas of the maths curriculum. Streaming classes, raising expectations and encouraging pupils to decide on when they are ready to move from the carpet to begin individual work have contributed to a rise in pupil progress and attainment in maths.

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Since July we have continued to look at ways of improving standards further with a focus on reading by using pupil premium funding on the ‘Better Reading Partnership’. Intensive training was delivered to all teachers, teaching assistants and parent volunteers to enable them to develop an effective partnership through spending frequent, quality time with identified pupils. Data is already showing targeted pupils have made accelerated progress.

We are delighted that the caring ethos, high expectations and supportive teamwork by all, has been rewarded with a ‘good’ from Ofsted but more importantly for us, our pupils are happy and successful young people, acquiring and achieving the relevant skills required to become responsible and productive members of a fast moving society.
This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
Shotley Bridge Junior School is a smaller than average junior school catering for 153 pupils aged 7-11 years. It is situated centrally in the village of Shotley Bridge, north-west County Durham.

The school has a two-pronged approach to improving performance which combines rigorous and tight tracking of progress and monitoring of standards in Literacy and Numeracy with an inspiring creative curriculum which is designed to encourage independent confident learning.

Children usually enter school from our feeder infant school with higher than average attainment. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has remained good over recent years and progress has improved as a result of careful monitoring and appropriate interventions. The school attracts a significant number of pupils entering school at a time other than Year 3 and a high proportion of these ‘joiners’ have special educational or social and emotional needs which we must work hard to address in a limited time frame.

The development of our woodland by children and our wider community over the last three years has had a significant impact on the children’s motivation and has provided a wealth of ‘real’ learning experiences for them. It has enabled us to work in a meaningful way with the community, including our Village Trust, Britain in Bloom and a variety of local businesses who have sponsored and helped us. International companies have also joined us in our aim to develop our woodland by providing sponsorship so that we can use it for learning whilst maintaining the habitat for the badgers, foxes, deer, bats and diverse plant-life. AkzoNobel, Toyota and the ESH group have all played a part in our continuing journey to help our children to grow into responsible citizens who care for and value their environment and community. We have also learned and taken advice from the Woodland Trust and the Wildlife Trust, who provided us with a night-time video camera, opening up the fascinating nocturnal antics of our woodland animals.

The children are aware that our school is an important part of our community and that we have a responsibility to ‘give back’ to that community whenever we can. They are enterprising and intrinsically motivated fund raisers for local charities, our choir sings at local church events on a regular basis and we participate, together with our feeder infant school, in the village Victorian Christmas weekend. We also maintain the planting and flower tubs near our school.

As a Headteacher, I really value the strengths of the staff and distributive leadership has enabled teachers to develop into strong middle leaders who contribute their interests and skills willingly. Children’s learning is guided by their own questions which are generated following a ‘wow’ event which launches the school-wide theme and creates genuine interest. Our creative curriculum brings mystery, magic and drama to the primary curriculum. The skill of the teaching staff is used to ensure that learning is rapid and covers essential knowledge and skills.

Reading is at the centre of all we do. We firmly believe that reading enables children to access the whole world. We all love using tablet technology and value the amazing knowledge at our fingertips on the internet but we also make sure our children have opportunities to value the beauty and experience of sharing books. This approach of very structured teaching of Literacy and Numeracy combined with investigative, creative learning provides solid academic knowledge and fires children’s imagination. Our school is an ‘ideas factory’ valuing creativity and carefully crafting experiences to nurture the guardians of the future.
Woodland Trust and the Wildlife Trust, who provided us with a night-time video camera, opening up the fascinating nocturnal antics of our woodland animals. Our premises manager has a teaching element in his post and has co-ordinated the physical development of our woodland which includes an outdoor auditorium and a classroom workspace.

Parents and carers have enjoyed joining in our learning journeys and we have welcomed them as a valuable resource. Grandparents and parents have taught our children local crafts, shared memories and taught games as part of our Rights Respecting School work on a child’s right to play. They are regular classroom helpers alongside our Governors who are actively involved in the daily life of the school placing them in an ideal position to be critical and challenging.

The children are aware that our school is an important part of our community and that we have a responsibility to ‘give back’ to that community whenever we can. They are enterprising and intrinsically motivated fund raisers for local charities, our choir sings at local church events on a regular basis and we participate, together with our feeder infant school, in the village Victorian Christmas weekend. We also maintain the planting and flower tubs near our school.

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This approach of very structured teaching of Literacy and Numeracy combined with investigative, creative learning provides solid academic knowledge and fires children’s imagination. Our school is an ‘ideas factory’ valuing creativity and carefully crafting experiences to nurture the guardians of the future.
We are a small infant and nursery school with 137 children, serving the village of Leadgate, County Durham, a former mining community. 45.9% of our children are entitled to free school meals and 37.6% have special educational needs. Most pupils are White British.

Our ‘mini campus’, including day care and a children’s centre enable us to fulfil the needs of the whole family. Improved relationships and successful collaborative working with these partners has had a significant bearing on our improved outcomes.

On my appointment in September 2011, it became apparent that whilst the teaching and learning across the school was good, there had been little strategic leadership. I am a believer in investing in people and, for this good school to move forward, realised that teachers, teaching assistants and governors required guidance, support, and improved knowledge to achieve their potential so that the children could achieve theirs. I wanted all to appreciate that learning is a lifelong process of transferring information and experience into knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes.

Where are we now?

Our reading, writing and maths at level 2b+ are all up at least 18% this year in comparison to 2012. Our phonics screening 2013 is 35% above the national average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>All Pupils</td>
<td>National 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did we get there?

Pre post all staff shared with me what they perceived to be the school’s strengths and weaknesses. This process allowed me to gage both the levels of staff confidence and where they saw themselves within the structure of the school. This naturally progressed into the first appraisal cycle for all staff. Challenging targets were set. Staff embraced the appraisal process, having the opportunity to up skill to address shared goals. They knew that they would then be equipped to motivate and improve the children’s learning experiences.

CPD became a priority and was determined by the priorities of the new and evolving plan. Governors acknowledged that they too needed further training related to the priorities of the school.
There were no definitions of the responsibilities of subject leaders. Intensive in house training was undertaken. Leaders were given a clear, practical route which would enable them to make a valuable contribution to school self review. Leaders then had ownership and were motivated to drive improvements thus improving outcomes.

The introduction of quality monitoring of teaching and learning improved teacher performance and planning. Teacher’s ability to analyse data meaningfully together with half termly pupil progress tracking meetings with myself ensured children’s next steps were quickly identified.

Data analysis showed we needed to take steps to close the gaps for our vulnerable groups. A pupil premium funded dedicated teaching assistant would meet this need. She has a strict timetable, has intensive tracking systems and feeds back to teachers weekly. This investment has had a significant impact on our children’s progress. Following further training other teaching assistants are also making a greater impact on outcomes through such interventions as Lexia, Speech/ Language link, Getting Along etc.

Special Educational Needs became a priority for the school. Introducing early identification of SEN – particularly in Early Years - along with ensuring that our IEP targets were specific, manageable and achievable means improved opportunities for all children.

The schools 2010 Ofsted cited pupil’s attendance as low. Poor attendance, particularly punctuality, continued to impact on pupils learning. We made a single point of entry, demanded on the spot lateness reasons, shared learning minutes lost, increased 1-1 consultations and involved the governing body. Attendance below 97% triggered education welfare officer’s involvement. These strategies resulted in us meeting the local authority targets for the last two years.

Major remodelling of the early years outdoors provided a space more conducive to creativity. The innovative step of sharing this 0-5yrs. learning area improved the social skills of the children and everyone was learning to love learning at an early age.

Staff appreciated that for all of the above to be effective there had to be complete transparency, improved communication channels and complete cohesion. Now, two years down the line, the school team is one and growing in strength.

Lyn Blacklock, Headteacher.
Tow Law Millennium Primary School

Celebrating Success at Tow Law Millennium Primary School

Our Vision for high quality education is to provide a happy, caring, stimulating environment in which children demonstrate positive behaviour and strive to achieve their full potential academically, culturally and socially.

Tow Law Millenium Primary School is a small school situated in a rural area near Bishop Auckland in County Durham. The school is set in an area of high deprivation and draws its intake from six local Authority housing estates which are surrounded by a small number of farms and hamlets. The area is rurally isolated.

Following her appointment in 2001 the Headteacher, Lisa Jackson, focused on setting high expectations for all pupils and stabilising behaviour in the school was the main priority.

The next challenge was raising standards! The school focused initially on Numeracy and, after a visit to a local primary school, decided to implement the daily basic skills maths session. This takes place as soon as the children come into school. The work is on the whiteboard and not a minute is lost!! All of the children from Y1 to Y6 settle down quickly and quietly and begin their learning. All aspects of maths are covered each day which ensures constant reinforcement of learning. It may be a little old fashioned but it works and the results speak for themselves.

The school also felt at a disadvantage as a result of not having its own nursery. Again it was time for change. Governors worked extremely hard with the Headteacher and Local Authority. The Private Day Care provision on site closed at the spring half term in 2012 and, after a lot of hard work during the holiday, we were very proud to open our very own school-based provision a week later.

In October 2012, the Chair of Governors initiated a Governor Skills audit which proved extremely useful. It was a brilliant way of recognising the achievements of this dedicated
and committed set of volunteers. When Ofsted arrived in January 2013, they recognised that the Governing Body were extremely ambitious for the school, highlighting the auditing tool as one of its many strengths. The Inspection also highlighted that this was a good school which was recognition for all of the hard work of the Head, staff, Governors, parents and - of course - the children.

Our next challenge was to build on this and when the Inspector suggested we work towards the nationally accredited “Governor Mark”, our Governors jumped at the chance.

They worked closely together to meet the standard necessary. Relationships between the Governing Body and Headteacher are open and transparent and we were notified towards the end of the summer holidays that we had been successful in our application. Quoting the letter we received, ‘Governors take a huge pride in their school and their commitment is to be admired.’ We have a fantastic community and cannot wait to receive our certificate so that we can proudly display it in our main entrance. At the heart of everything the school does are the children. They are enthusiastic, hardworking and they tell us they are proud to be part of our school.

Recently we took them to the Iskon Temple in Newcastle to experience Hindu culture and worship. The day was a resounding success and as a result we have initiated a programme of further visits to other places of worship. This will develop in pupils a better understanding of the multicultural make up of society in the United Kingdom through first-hand experiences.

We have a very structured school day in the morning and a Creative Curriculum approach to our termly topics. Pupils achieve well because the curriculum is interesting and teachers use real life situations to bring it to life.

Governors are very active and the children enjoy the benefits of caring for the outdoors and growing their own food at our weekly Gardening Club with the help of Mr Bell, our Chair of Governors.

Not only do they grow the food but they also enjoy eating it too!

In conclusion, Tow Law Millennium Primary School is a good school with a warm and welcoming atmosphere and a child-centred approach to the education and welfare of its pupils.
St. Anne’s vision draws the whole community together around a common goal, supporting learning for all, a responsibility which is shared by all stakeholders, cogs to drive the school forward as an interdependent team. With everyone involved, informed and accountable, a strong feeling of ownership and commitment underpins the distributed management structure, based on investing in staff and promoting hands-on subject leadership. Professional development is paramount and in observing colleagues with areas of strength and sharing good practice with other schools, an outward-looking culture has laid foundations for long-term networking. Despite rising standards, there is no room for complacency; data demonstrates that there is more capacity to improve, through the sharing of accountability across school, both amongst teachers and support assistants. Thus recent senior leadership and teaching appointments have been targeted to meet this need.

Teachers who have higher expectations, evaluate effectively and plan for progression, differentiation and challenge, are key. Familiarity with what constitutes outstanding teaching has led to making adjustments throughout lessons, with finely-tuned criteria increasing the frequency of effective teaching, whilst an increase in open-ended questioning and analysis of common misconceptions have equally enhanced the learning process. Teachers are more confident to assign a level and set realistic, stretching targets negotiated with pupils, based on ability and previous knowledge, then build into future planning opportunities to scaffold learning in a variety of ways. More rigorous assessment procedures have given rise to cohort plans with individual development profiles for each child, identifying strengths and weaknesses and ways to address them to ensure optimum progression for all. This heightened focus on gap-closing has led to early, appropriate intervention strategies. Our ethos builds on self-confidence; creditable failure is an integral part of teaching and learning.

Pupils at St. Anne’s are prepared for the next phase of their learning journey through our aim to ensure depth of task, with limits increasingly fixed by the potential of the activity and capability of the child, rather than the teacher. Reading and writing skills are reinforced in a range of contexts across the thematic curriculum; numerical understanding is deepened, as other curricular aspects increasingly flavour real-life problem solving, thus ensuring that the core skills are being continuously extended. Having highlighted, through pupil audit, Science and Geography as less valued areas, the school achieved the Silver Level of the Science Quality Mark and is now embarking upon the Geography Quality Mark; our Olympics whole school curriculum project won an LA Award. Parents now monitor their child’s reading progress via a shared learning platform, whilst a more creative approach to homework tasks promotes further parental involvement, with assignment options for the older children building learning power for transferable skills.

Children benefit from enrichment opportunities not only through extra-curricular clubs, but also via the taught curriculum and specialist teaching,
by playing to teacher strengths in Music, ICT, Art, MFL and PE, based on the belief that having a talent or special interest is important to self-esteem - a vital element in the physical, emotional, social, moral, intellectual and spiritual development of the whole child. Our strong commitment to a wide range of educational opportunities can be seen through the success of our sports teams and through our dramatic productions, through our thriving choir and our ukulele orchestra. Individual and group efforts are regularly shared with the wider school community.

Pupils are challenged to broaden their horizons with our European, southern and national school links. Skype sessions with our French partners have culminated in a Talking Book project, via a shared learning platform; to complement this, Reception children are taught French, with our oldest pupils learning two languages. Annual visits from our French partner school have enhanced intercultural understanding on a European level, whilst developing our link with Bangladesh has further promoted global community cohesion. Appreciating the value of diversity, dispelling barriers and celebrating similarities in this way have laid firm foundations for achieving the full International School Award. We place equal importance on developing an awareness of our national heritage through two diverse links; equally, the extra-curricular learning acquired from residential stays has promoted a respect for local context, in terms of its historical and geographical features.

Aspiration is raised through such initiatives as ‘Thrills and Skills’, ‘Houses and Forts’ and ‘Believe and Achieve’, a community-based enterprise project, which has developed mutually productive relationships and promotes lifelong learning. Enlivening visits and visitors-artists, scientists, writers, sports people - have brought to learners’ attention examples of achievement from a wider range of real world contexts. Our partnership with Newcastle University gave rise to a shared project on global warming, which is currently on the Ofsted Good Practice Site and appeared in the Times Educational supplement. Being a Climate Change Lead School contributed much to our Green Flag Award, supported by the inclusion of Sustainability across the curriculum, which in turn prompted The Newcastle Journal Sustainable School of the Year Award and the Durham Environmental Award. In its capacity as one of the nine national WWF Champion Schools, members of the eco group and myself were invited to Highgrove as guests of HRH Prince Charles last year - a memorable educational experience for our young environmental champions.

Holding such posts of responsibility in school produces confident role models; pupil voice is strong. Year 6 Buddies support their small friends and Young Leaders are trained to supervise younger children in organised play activities over lunchtime. Groups such as Junior Road Safety Officers, Junior Neighbourhood Watch and the Bike-It Crew furnish opportunities to enhance speaking and listening skills, thus contributing towards gaining Enhanced Healthy Schools Status. The Rights Respecting group lead the drive towards high standards of behaviours and the Fair Trade Squad has achieved the Fair Trade Award in consecutive years. Each of the above has representation on the Junior Management Team.

At the heart of what makes our ethos distinctive, lie our Christian beliefs in the power of the school to develop the potential of all its members; we aim to nurture the qualities which are needed to become resourceful, independent young adults, who recognise their own worth, as well as that of others and can make informed choices to be successful members of society. Our church school helps to tackle how this might be achieved from its position of faith; this has been enhanced through the recent appointment of a School Chaplain. Christian values, at the heart of the school’s values, are lived out in the web of relationships within the school community and manifest in every classroom and it is this very DNA which threads through and underpins the whole vision.
ST MARY’S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

‘GROWING, LOVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE ARMS OF MARY’

In September 2012 I was appointed as Executive Headteacher of St Mary’s, one of the largest Catholic primary schools in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle and the City of Sunderland.

The Ofsted Inspection in October 2011 was the second satisfactory report the school had received. This report identified a number of areas for improvement including the need to:

• Increase levels of communication with parents and carers
• Enhance the quality of school improvement planning
• Improve the quality of teaching in terms of assessment and the application of basic skills.

From our first day together in September 2012 the whole school staff worked tirelessly to improve all aspects of St Mary’s. This resulted in a rapid rate of improvement across school which was identified by Ofsted in September 2013.

‘There is a strong sense of working together towards a common goal and successful improvements to pupils’ outcomes reflect the capacity of the school to improve further.’

Ofsted 2013

Engaging pupils in the learning experience was paramount in improving outcomes. Developments to our creative curriculum ensured that it is vibrant and exciting; bringing together educational visits, real-life experiences, a whole text approach to teaching literacy, links with business, showcases of children’s work and using the outdoor environment. ‘…curriculum is increasingly creative, exciting and stimulating.’

To begin with it was important to bring everyone together and it was decided to hold an open meeting for governors, parents, staff and pupils where aspects of school improvement were discussed and ideas were shared. This became the basis of our school improvement plan.

‘School self-evaluation is precise with weaker aspects of the school’s work accurately identified as priorities for the coming year.’

Ofsted 2013

Our Catholic ethos is central to all that we do and involving all stakeholders in the rewriting of our mission statement was pivotal in bringing the whole school community together. As a consequence of this, each morning staff gather together to pray and share updates. Prayer is then taken into the classroom where pupils prepare their own worship.

‘Pupils’ spiritual, moral social and cultural development is central to the school’s work…pupils grow into confident, reflective young people.’

Ofsted 2013

‘Children…settle into school quickly into a warm and supportive atmosphere they quickly gain confidence as they take full advantage of a wide range of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors. Children show increasing independence as they enter the world of pirates and look forward to beginning work on our Forest School in the meadow…’

Ofsted 2013

‘The outdoor environment has been chosen to sing at the Royal Albert Hall with 58 more pupils…’

Ofsted 2013

‘In September 2013 mean that…pupils make progress. This is leading to rising levels of attainment, and standards are now above average,’

Ofsted 2013

‘Individual rates of progress in 2013 mean that pupils grow into confident, reflective young people.’

Ofsted 2013

‘Ofsted 2013 confirmed that this approach had a positive impact on the teaching and learning experience…’

Ofsted 2013

‘Teachers think extremely carefully about the way to deliver lessons…imaginative teaching is…’

Ofsted 2013

‘Marking and Feedback Policy to include weekly opportunities for individual oral feedback, as well as the consistent use of levelled learning objectives and success criteria…’

Ofsted 2013

‘Academic success is important but St Mary’s also recognises the need to develop pupil’s knowledge, understanding and skills and understanding outside the classroom,’

Ofsted 2013

For more information please visit; www.stmarysrcsunderland.co.uk

Nursery class children – cooking in the kitchen!

Year 1 learning about Baptism through a real-life experience.

Year 4 learning how to fly on a broomstick – linked to learning about castles.

Year 5 learning about life in the Victorian courtyard through an educational visit.
On entry to Foundation Stage, children are provided with a fabulous start to school life. ‘Children...settle quickly into a warm and supportive atmosphere they quickly gain confidence as they take full advantage of a wide range of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors. Children show increasing independence as they enter the wet world of pirates or make lunch in the mud kitchen.’

Ofsted 2013

All key stages and staff work closely together to ensure the best possible outcomes for all our pupils. The introduction of a more rigorous system for tracking the performance of individual pupils from Nursery to Year 6, the setting of challenging targets, the introduction of pupil progress meetings and targeted interventions have all contributed significantly to the improvements in levels of achievement.

‘Individual rates of progress in 2013 mean that more pupils are making better than expected progress. This is leading to rising levels of attainment, and standards are now above average, particularly in reading and mathematics.’

Ofsted 2013

Academic success is important but St Mary’s also recognises the need to develop pupil’s knowledge, skills and understanding outside the classroom, providing a huge variety of extra curriculum activities including our highly successful football teams, netball team, fencing groups, Young Leaders Awards, cross-country teams, athletics teams, gardening club, lunchtime club, Highland Dancing, chess club, drama club and choir. In summer 2013 our choir were fortunate to be chosen to sing at the Royal Albert Hall with 58 families and staff along for support.

We have had an incredibly successful year and are now working hard to improve our school grounds and looking forward to beginning work on our Forest School in the meadow...

For more information please visit; www.stmarysrsunderland.co.uk

It was also important to empower teachers to use their professional knowledge and concentrate on what makes a difference to pupils making progress. Ofsted 2013 confirmed that this approach had a positive impact on the teaching in school, ‘teachers think extremely carefully about the way to deliver lessons...imaginative and creative’. This resulted in changes to the Marking and Feedback Policy to include weekly opportunities for individual oral feedback, as well as the consistent use of levelled learning objectives and success criteria... ‘teaching is good with some that is outstanding...teachers are enthusiastic...they plan lessons which engage and motivate pupils so much that they look forward to the next lesson with anticipation’.
This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
Lancashire’s Students Achieve Above Average SATS

Lancashire’s primary schools ahead of the game in SATS results

SATS results show Lancashire’s primary schools continue to stay ahead of the game.

Figures just out for SATs tests taken by 11-year-olds this year show that the proportion of remained unchanged in the past year.

The county is also above the national average for reading, writing and maths separately, and rates of progress are better than average.

Bob Stott, Lancashire County Council’s director responsible for schools, said: “I am particularly proud of our schools and pupils for producing these excellent results, considering that scores have remained static nationally.”
BOLTON SCHOOLS CELEBRATING
BEST EVER SATS RESULTS

Waving their SATS results are Lostock Primary School pupils and staff, from left, Ella Harkness, aged 10, Rebecca Unsworth, year six teacher, Tracey Cafferty, year six teaching assistant, and Lucas Greenhalgh, aged 11

SCHOOLS in Bolton are celebrating today after primary school league tables show they are leaving the rest of the country behind.

Results in the key stage two SATS exams were up more than the national average.

The tables detail how each school performed in the key stage two national curriculum tests taken in the summer by year six children. Bolton’s overall pass rate was 89 per cent in English, which is up on last year’s 86 per cent.

In maths, this figure stood at 87 per cent, up by two percentage points.

Nationally, the pass rate in English went up from 85 per cent last year to 87 per cent, and in maths rose from 84 per cent to 85 per cent.

Schools in Bolton also performed well in a new measure — reading, writing and maths — with 79 per cent of children achieving the grade, compared to just 75 per cent nationally.

Cllr Kevin McKeon, Bolton Council’s cabinet member for schools, said: “The results are fantastic and they are due to the hard work of teachers and the children who are supported by the parents.

“It is a tribute to the family of schools in Bolton that this has been achieved.

“I would like to thank the school improvement service for helping schools to achieve these results and I am particularly delighted with how the schools compare so well to the national picture.”

At Lostock Primary School, not only did every year six child achieve a level four or above in English and maths, it was the only school in the borough where 100 per cent of children achieved the grade in reading, writing and maths.

Headteacher Gill Smith said the results were a reflection of the children’s love of learning.

She added: “We are thrilled with the results and for the children because they reflect their hard work, commitment to learning and enthusiasm.

“Well done everyone. You fully deserve all of your successes.”
Sandbrook CPS celebrated its eight birthday this September. It is an amalgamation of two former, low performing, local primary schools, Queensway CPS and Hill Top CPS (which was used to film the TV drama ‘Waterloo Road’). It came together because of a declining number of pupils in the Kirkholt area of Rochdale, an area of high deprivation. I was appointed the Headteacher designate in April 2005 and the school opened as Sandbrook in the September. During the five months I had to prepare for the school’s opening, I observed both schools in action and looked at what both schools were achieving. I spoke with teachers, governors, pupils, parents and members of the community asking them, ‘What type of  school do you want Sandbrook to be? What should Sandbrook look like in five years time?’ The stakeholders’ responses, together with the audit of achievement, created a clear vision for change. The Governors and I used this information as the basis for change and improvement. We organised a special ‘away day’ where stakeholders were brought together with the task of developing our blueprint for the future. The day was a fantastic success with all participants feeling ownership of the school’s future and the responsibility to make it happen. Together, we laid the first of the many foundation blocks we needed to achieve long term growth and sustainable success.

With a clear vision and purpose intact, we set about creating a five year plan which would target the key areas of development. These areas were the building blocks on which our success was to be achieved:

- Develop a culture for learning
- Raise attainment and accelerate progress
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning
- Improve the conditions for learning
- Develop a curriculum to meet the needs of the learners
- Develop a sustainable learning community

We had started life at Sandbrook in the old Queensway school whilst a new building was being constructed right next to it. The new school building was completed and we moved into it in September 2006. Three days into the first term in the new building we had our first Ofsted Inspection. Although not everything was working effectively, we survived and were judged Satisfactory which matched our own self-evaluation. The report was accurate and reinforced that we knew our school well and
that we were on track. The strategies, systems and target areas were praised and the report recognised that we were moving in the right direction.

We continued the journey. All staff were role models of positivity, good manners, making the right choices and using the language of learning. We began to raise standards by: improving teacher’s knowledge of tracking, performance planning and assessment for learning. We audited provision in both Maths and English and ensured that teachers were consistently teaching an agreed non negotiable curriculum with quality intervention programmes when needed.

Our developing Inclusion Team ensured that children’s barriers to learning were being effectively supported through establishing a consistent behaviour policy, developing nurture and Thinc room provision.

We introduced a ‘WOW’ curriculum which challenged children’s thinking by asking questions so children would not be passive passengers in their lessons. The nurturing of pupils’ own responsibilities in their learning by the introduction of assertive mentoring helped develop and change the culture towards a ‘we can do it’ outlook.

The outcomes of these and many other initiatives have been as we planned, based on sound foundations, to ensure growth and success - Rome wasn’t built in a day! We are continuing to grow and develop as a school, both in provision and numbers. For the past two years our school intake has risen from sixty to ninety and we are now a very large three form entry primary with over five hundred children. Pupil premium, together with the increased finances from the extra pupils, has been used creatively and effectively to widen experiences and support our learners. Our Extended School programme caters for a wide range of pupil interests.

We have had good and outstanding Ofsted judgements in our last two inspections, not to mention several positive subject inspections. Attainment and achievement have improved significantly. The quality of teaching and learning is good and outstanding. Senior leaders have high aspirations and know the school. The children are outstanding and we are lucky to have one of the hardest working and dedicated teams possible. The curriculum meets our children’s needs - it continues to engage and enrich them. Our children, parents, staff and governors are justifiably proud of our school community. We continue to face many daily and long term challenges at Sandbrook but with the continued dedication, hard work and commitment of the Sandbrook team, we look forward to the next stages of our journey.
SEVEN STARS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

‘WHERE CHILDREN COME FIRST’

Seven Stars is a relatively small primary school in an area of high deprivation.

The progress of our pupils has been impressive and our results last year (2012) showed 100% progress for all pupils in English and 89% in Maths and 83% age-related expectations in combined English and Maths.

The school rose from special measures in 2006 to our most recent full inspection which judged us to be ‘good’ in 2010 and a specific inspection in Enterprise as ‘outstanding’. There are several factors that have contributed to the success of Seven Stars and these can be summed up as ‘SHINES’:

S - Skilled staff
H - High hopes
I - Immediate intervention
N - Nurturing ethos
E - Engaging curriculum
S - Special moments

Skilled staff

All staff at Seven Stars have unique skills which they use to benefit all the children in the school.

One of our Teaching Assistants is an avid gardener whilst other Teaching Assistants lead a Cooking for Life project in our newly developed kitchen area.

Critically, our teachers are determined to improve teaching and learning and the Lesson Study model has been a way of peer-supported evaluation in which effective improvements are achieved through open and honest discussion rather than ‘examination’ by Senior Managers alone. This has meant the focus has been on the teachers being learners together instead of competitors for the best grades!

High hopes

Despite the socio-economic challenges surrounding us we believe there is no reason why our children cannot achieve the highest attainment and progress.

A recent boys writing project saw remarkable results when we worked with the Local Authority and other primary schools to improve the writing of disengaged Year 3 pupils.

They spent afternoons outside in tents writing in mud, collecting and identifying leaves and a variety of other activities all of which supported their learning as they kept diaries of what they had experienced. They made accelerated pro-
progress in their writing and more importantly acquired an increased desire to write.

**Immediate intervention**

We found that responding quickly to any child’s failure to progress was crucial rooted in identifying potential barriers which may occur at any moment in a child’s life, and then not accepting those barriers as an excuse for failure.

We have a highly skilled Teaching Assistant who runs the majority of our group intervention work across the cohorts and a part-time teacher who is able to quickly adapt and address more specific needs in response to pupil progress data. Our Deputy Head delivers daily challenging intervention sessions for older pupils.

**Nurturing ethos**

We place huge emphasis on developing the skills that promote positive behaviour and effective learning. We were particularly pleased when our most recent OFSTED inspection judged us to be a good school where care, guidance and support are outstanding.

Our Nurture group (the ‘Eden Class’) enables children to develop resilience to overcome potential barriers to their learning. The impact on the children and school has been immense with many children who had faced an uncertain future thriving and achieving national expectations.

**Engaging curriculum**

‘Learning Journeys’ such as Indian Culture or Amazing Oceans have engaged our children and their stimulus for learning is further enhanced by visits and visitors.

Good questioning has been key and we have seen how this can improve independent learning and deeper understanding when the first answer can often be used as a stepping stone to a more challenging thought or question.

OFSTED, visited in June 2011 to look at the work we were doing on ‘Enterprise Education’ and were extremely impressed. We were very proud when they said ‘the overall effectiveness of enterprise education in promoting pupils’ economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability is outstanding.’

**Special moments**

Our final factor for improved performance at Seven Stars has been the special moments which have brought the school community together around a common theme or event.

In our ‘Unique Week’ the children explored what it was like to be deaf and met an Indian dancer who introduced us to the meanings behind Indian dance and culture.

Our children have many innate skills and much potential and our job is to use all of our professional abilities to enable them all to shine.
Woodfield School is a large Infant School with 270 pupils and three parallel classes per year group. The majority of children are from white British backgrounds. Woodfield School receives pupils from both within and outside its catchment area. More recently however the school has been oversubscribed and only families living within the area have been successful in being allocated a place for their child. There has been a change in the dynamics of the immediate catchment area over the last three years. The majority of housing within the area is privately owned. However, as this property becomes vacant it is advertised on the open market as ‘To Let’. Pupils attend Woodfield School from a wide range of early year’s settings and experiences.

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Our aim is to provide a curriculum and a school experience that develops children who are enthusiastic about their learning, independent individuals and will leave having had a positive experience of the beginning of their learning journey. SMSC is high priority across the school day and in the curriculum.

Attainment on entry suggests Woodfield School receives children who vary enormously in their ability. However, there are an increasing number of children joining the school with more complex medical and learning needs. The involvement of the school SENCO, outside agency support and good parental engagement is crucial to ensure these children are not disadvantaged in mainstream education. The teaching staff set challenging targets for each child developing their skills and supporting them to be the best that they can be. Children with additional needs and learning difficulties are challenged alongside those who are gifted and talented across the curriculum.

Lead teachers alongside the Senior Leadership Team monitor progress and practice through drop in lesson observations, book scrutiny’s, discussions with children and using the schools detailed tracking document. High standards are maintained and all staff strive to have aspirational targets for all children in their class.

The staff at Woodfield place the children at the centre of their learning, they are reflective in their practice with an evolving curriculum that meets the needs of the children though themes which engage boys and girls and is inclusive for all. It includes the children in helping to develop their own creative curriculum, beginning with a Wow factor and either a visit out of school or a visitor to school, eg author, workshop, multicultural and festival days.

ICT is used extensively across the curriculum with class iPad packs, flipcams, laptops and current...
software or internet sites. Outdoor learning as well as in the classroom has encouraged the children to use their initiative and be independent learners from the outset. As a result children are motivated, engaged and keen to show what they are learning.

Parents are included in their child’s learning from the beginning of each term with curriculum information meetings and workshops as well as being asked to support the curriculum through being the ‘visitor’.

The Headteacher has empowered and raised the profile of all staff in school as leaders in education. Lead subject teachers have an increased profile in school life, eg in school assemblies and leading curriculum meetings for parents and carers. Teaching staff are encouraged to develop new strategies in learning and teaching, to be at the forefront of education and national developments and to take risks developing new initiatives through coaching and sharing good practice within school and in supporting others.

Staff take ownership for their own professional development including National Award for SENCo, NPQH, SLE and MAs as well as many teaching assistants who have completed various NVQ levels, several who have completed the HLTA qualification and the Learning Mentor course.

Children are also empowered through the School Council and other positions of responsibility such as librarians and playground buddies.

Woodfield thrives on celebrating the children’s achievements both in school and outside of school and everyone celebrates these achievements in assembly, including Head teachers awards and certificates.

Gifted and talented children develop their skills through links with other classes and accessing specific extended school clubs such as gymnastics, violins, art. Healthy competition with the children (and the staff!) is promoted during Sports day with a team ‘winners cup’.

Good citizenship values are celebrated through class reward charts and a kindness and courtesy book. Lunchtime supervisors also award a cup for the class with the best manners at lunchtime. Our Learning Mentor supports children in small group work and a lunchtime ‘Jumping Jax’ club.

Woodfield school has experienced major building developments over the last 4 years including a complete refurbishment of the school hall, corridors, EYFS classrooms, EYFS outdoor area, Playground, toilets and the main school reception office. This has resulted in a once ‘tired’ building now matching the engaging curriculum and high achievement happening within it.

Woodfield School has a reputation by the community for being a ‘good’ school and Ofsted has recognised this with its most recent outstanding award.

For more information visit; www.woodfield.shropshire.sch.uk
Marsh Green is an average-sized primary school serving a highly deprived area of Wigan in the North West of England. I began as Head in January 2012 following very poor SAT results the previous Summer. Staff morale had plummeted and there was a lack of clear direction and purpose. The management structure was very weighty with a Head, a Deputy, two Assistant heads and two TLR posts. This underwent a major restructure with both Assistant head posts being discontinued and the TLR posts being changed to more effectively meet the needs of the school. Training was undertaken by all staff and a greater emphasis of accountability introduced to ensure everyone was responsible for the success of pupils. The Governing Body also underwent a major restructure which enabled a new positive focus to be developed. Support was available from the Local Authority through regular visits from a neighbouring headteacher in the role of LLE.

It was important to acknowledge what the school did well; and this was very much the pastoral care and support offered to our children, many of whom had social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school had a very warm and welcoming ethos and it was important to keep this at the fore. Good teaching was in evidence but in pockets rather than as a consistent feature throughout the school and each lesson. Therefore the initial challenge was to make teaching and learning a cohesive focus for all staff. A tracking system was devised, not simply to rigorously track children but to recognise where and when they were experiencing difficulties and to enable appropriate intervention programmes to be put into place. Children were introduced to Assessment for Learning techniques so that they were very much a part of the learning process and understood more about how to improve the quality of their work. We set up Triads where teachers observed and gave feedback to each other in groups of three. This was crucial in sharing best practice to gain consistency and collaboration across the school. All teachers then began to recognise their own skills and unpick the positive aspects of their teaching to build upon this and improve even further. Staff enthusiastically recognise this as their most effective form of CPD and it continues to evolve.

Marsh Green Primary

School

ACHIEVE, BELIEVE AND CELEBRATE

Mr. Gill Leigh

www.marshgreenprimary.co.uk
The curriculum was enriched to provide as many engaging learning experiences as possible. Many of our children do not venture off the local estate so to give them wider opportunities was key. An immersion room was constructed to project images and films onto three walls, which has had a huge impact on firing children’s imaginations for writing. Regular trips were organised to enhance the work of the curriculum. A school garden was planted to give children knowledge of how food grows and healthy eating. We keep chickens so classes can use eggs to cook, bake and set up enterprise schemes. The creative curriculum was greatly enhanced through attending singing festivals, putting on performances and inviting theatre groups into school.

Links with the immediate area were forged, such as the local library. Each class spends at least half a term each academic year visiting the library on a weekly basis. This has had a positive impact on reading for both pupils and their parents as they now see the library as a very valuable community resource. The church too, became a source of curriculum support for RE but also many aspects of PHSE. We developed collaborative working practices with other local schools and have recently embarked on the SHINE project, working with the Hallé Orchestra to enhance children’s learning further and provide unimaginable opportunities.

This collective approach has ensured that the whole school has become committed to ensuring the children are helped to be ‘the best they can be’ and has seen a vast improvement in our SAT results. Marsh Green is a thriving hub of the community and we were thrilled to be awarded good in all areas in our recent inspection in July 2013. We will continue to strive to provide the very best for all our children to help them achieve, believe and celebrate in their successes.

Mrs Gill Leigh

www.marshgreenprimary.co.uk
St. Thomas’ Church of England Primary School

‘Working Together, Friends Forever’

St. Thomas’ is a larger than average primary school which became two form entry in 2010. The school is situated in a deprived area. All pupils are from minority ethnic groups; the vast majority are Pakistani and Bangladeshi with an increasing proportion of pupils coming from Eastern European countries. Most pupils speak English as an additional language, as do their parents. Historically, standards of attainment have been low, mobility high, attendance problematic and engaging parents challenging.

The key driver for change in school was raising the expectations of staff, pupils, parents and governors through co-ordinated planning and action. We created a ‘can do’ culture that raised not only the aspirations of pupils but of their parents too. Our journey has been challenging, exciting and rewarding.

One of the first areas we looked at was staffing. Several good and outstanding teachers were appointed and the senior leadership team was re-structured. Succession planning became a high priority and a stronger leadership team emerged, all of whom share the same vision.

School priorities regarding raising attainment and progress in the core subjects were shared with staff and governors. A Governors’ Standards Committee was formed and teaching staff self-evaluated themselves against the ‘Teachers’ Standards’. The evaluations were used in performance management to set objectives which would impact on standards.

Much time was spent on improving teaching and learning. There was a focus on making sure staff were clear about formative assessment procedures. Target setting became more consistent and children gained a better understanding of their next steps. Teachers from parallel year groups were given PPA time together so that they could share ideas and expertise. ‘Wow’ activities were encouraged in order to engage the pupils and enrich their life experiences. The school invested in building four new classrooms, a studio and a meeting room. In addition to this the Nursery and Reception playgrounds were fitted with bespoke outdoor play equipment. Lessons were observed jointly by senior leaders and our SIP to clarify judgements and teachers were encouraged to observe each other for their professional development. ‘Good leadership of teaching has ensured that standards have continued to improve in all subjects and for all groups of pupils’. (2013 Ofsted)

A web based tracking system was introduced enabling staff to have ownership of the data. They could identify their vulnerable groups, check attainment and progress and put relevant interventions in place. Our tracking data was further refined by the introduction of average point scores and pivats to measure small steps in progress. Termly pupil progress meetings involved all the SLT including the SENCO. Every child in school is discussed and from these meetings a range of support is put in place for those who need it. The support can range from 1 to 1, counselling, breakfast club, interventions and so on. It’s about looking after the whole child and we make good use of our pupil premium in order to ensure they flourish in all areas not just academically.

Our school’s extended services for parents were deemed outstanding by Ofsted 2013. Over 100 of our parents have enrolled on year long Maths, ICT and English courses. This has had a significant impact on parental involvement in the school’s work and on raising pupils’ attainment and progress. Parents have a much better understanding of what we are trying to achieve and are very supportive of school.

We are committed to closing the gap as early as possible, consequently, school has linked with other providers to ensure there is quality provision for two and three year olds in our community.

Finally, our aim is be outstanding in every area. Our next steps as outlined by Ofsted are to give children more opportunities to develop their problem solving skills, revise our target setting so that it becomes more purposeful and to develop a more consistent approach to the teaching of Phonics. We are confident that we have already made progress in each of these areas.

After visiting our school, Denise Lewis OBE, said, ‘I had a really enjoyable day and from speaking to the teachers and the children, it is clear that St. Thomas’ is a very progressive and creative school.’

We are very proud of our unique school.
their life experiences. The school invested in building four new classrooms, a studio and a meeting room. In addition to this the Nursery and Reception playgrounds were fitted with bespoke outdoor play equipment. Lessons were observed jointly by senior leaders and our SIP to clarify judgements and teachers were encouraged to observe each other for their professional development. ‘Good leadership of teaching has ensured that standards have continued to improve in all subjects and for all groups of pupils’. (2013 Ofsted)

A web based tracking system was introduced enabling staff to have ownership of the data. They could identify their vulnerable groups, check attainment and progress and put relevant interventions in place. Our tracking data was further refined by the introduction of average point scores and pivats to measure small steps in progress. Termly pupil progress meetings involved all the SLT including the SENCO. Every child in school is discussed and from these meetings a range of support is put in place for those who need it. The support can range from 1 to 1, counselling, breakfast club, interventions and so on. It’s about looking after the whole child and we make good use of our pupil premium in order to ensure they flourish in all areas not just academically.

Our school’s extended services for parents were deemed outstanding by Ofsted 2013. Over 100 of our parents have enrolled on year long Maths, ICT and English courses. This has had a significant impact on parental involvement in the school’s work and on raising pupils’ attainment and progress. Parents have a much better understanding of what we are trying to achieve and are very supportive of school.

We are committed to closing the gap as early as possible, consequently, school has linked with other providers to ensure there is quality provision for two and three year olds in our community.

Finally, our aim is be outstanding in every area. Our next steps as outlined by Ofsted are to give children more opportunities to develop their problem solving skills, revise our target setting so that it becomes more purposeful and to develop a more consistent approach to the teaching of Phonics. We are confident that we have already made progress in each of these areas.

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We are very proud of our unique school.
Layton Primary School

GROWING GREAT MINDS TOGETHER

Layton Primary School is an amazing place to teach, to learn, and an inspirational school with talented staff that I, as Head teacher, am proud and privileged to lead.

We have recently and rapidly improved the provision for our pupils; at an accelerated rate, moving from Satisfactory to Good in under 12 months, securing our highest ever SATS results in the process and ensuring our Value Added moves into the highest 7% in the country.

We are a busy and thriving large, three form entry primary school within the coastal town of Blackpool with over 580 pupils. Just over a third of pupils are entitled to free school meals. We teach a quality, individualised curriculum, resulting in rapid progress from all groups of pupils, regardless of their background.

I was appointed as Head teacher and started on May 1st 2012, following a satisfactory inspection from Ofsted in June 2011. The school had several clear priorities for improvement, which we began to focus on fully in September 2012.

A strong vision for teaching and learning, to enable us to devise a high quality curriculum, was our first priority. Engaging staff and pupils to be active in their learning was key to driving that vision. We wanted all staff and pupils to create an environment where learning was central to all aspects of school life.

Key to achieving that vision was staff development around pedagogical awareness, assessment for learning, raised expectations and devising a curriculum that could deliver rapid gains in learning. Tapping into processes for accelerated learning opportunities, and facilitating and providing those opportunities on a daily basis requires skill, understanding, and the ability to challenge each pupil from the moment they walk into their classroom.

The staff developed active engagement in their professional development; as a result of this, the children became more active in the learning process.

Curriculum development came from teams rather than individual coordinators, enabling our vision to spread faster and increase staff participation in its design. A constant and
The school’s Governors utilised their cohesion and skills quickly; and offered the strongest support and challenge to the changes within school, recognising the positive benefits those changes would bring, ensuring the school remained focused throughout the process.

Parental Engagement and the opportunity for staff and pupils to engage a wide audience for their work grew from the work undertaken via our school blog; updated regularly, this forum gave us a vehicle to share our work with over 20,000 visits since its inception in September 2012 – within a year our school community had reached all corners of the Globe.

The improvement in school performance was marked and dramatic within the year, as can be demonstrated from the table below. Our OFSTED grading in April 2013 moved to Good. Our 2013 SATS results increased dramatically, and our value added increased from the 58th percentile to the 7th. All groups of pupils within RAISE online are registered as achieving significantly above National Average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading Level 4 +</th>
<th>Reading Level 5 +</th>
<th>Writing Level 4 +</th>
<th>Writing Level 5 +</th>
<th>Numeracy Level 4 +</th>
<th>Numeracy Level 5 +</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please visit http://laytonblogs.net for a closer look at our work.

Jonathan Clucas, Head teacher
St Mary & St Paul’s is a single form entry primary school in Knowsley. The school serves a community that is economically disadvantaged and around 70% of our pupils are eligible for Free School Meals. Core to our whole purpose as a school is a determination to give children the skills, knowledge and attitudes that will have the biggest impact on their life chances – “to provide every child with the best possible education”, as our Values Statement says.

Improving pupil’s reading skills, and helping them to enjoy reading, were key challenges for us but ones that we believe we have tackled successfully using a ‘two-pronged’ approach.

At the upper end of the school we put quality ‘real’ books at the heart of our work in Literacy. Instead of extracts and exercises we use quality class novels as the centrepiece of English teaching. Often these books link literacy to other areas of the curriculum, providing children with a joined-up approach that made their reading more relevant. Thus ‘Carrie’s War’, ‘Kensuke’s Kingdom’ and ‘Holes’ have become part of children’s reading experience; this has had a positive impact on children’s attitudes to reading, as well as their skills.

We also recognised that children’s phonic skills weren’t progressing as quickly as we would have liked. Learning from excellent practice at Carr Mill Primary in St Helens, one of our Teaching School alliance partners, we introduced ‘Read, Write Inc.’ as an engaging and highly structured approach to teaching phonics. Children across the school were screened to assess phonic knowledge and then grouped according to phonic stage, rather than age. Anyone coming into our school first thing in the morning will see children in phonics groups working in virtually every available space – and having a great time!

The impact of highly targeted, structured phonics teaching has been enormous. By building more pace and challenge into our phonics delivery right from Foundation Stage, children’s
phonics skills have improved massively. In 2013, 67% of Year 1 pupils reached the expected level in the phonics assessment – roughly national average, up from 42% the previous year and representing outstanding progress from their starting points.

Combined with the work on class novels, which has now fed downwards through the school, our reading APS in KS1 has risen from 12.2 in 2010 to 15.0 in 2013. By the time they leave Year 6, 44% of children reached level 5 in reading and reading APS in KS2 has been above national average for the past two years.

Our Ofsted inspection in 2013 commented that:

“Pupils’ outstanding progress in reading is based on the school’s very effective programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Thereafter, the school’s very strong focus on extending pupils’ vocabulary and comprehension skills ensures that they are almost one term in advance of the national average in reading by the end of Year 6.”

Alongside these strategies, our school is also heavily involved in Initial Teacher Training. Having taken trainees from local HEIs for a number of years, last year we ran one of the first School Direct cohorts and this year have 32 trainees on our School Direct programme – working across a range of partner schools. As well as allowing us the chance to share the practice that we’ve found works well in our school, our involvement in ITT also impacts directly and positively on standards.

We view trainees as being part of the classroom team, alongside the class teacher and teaching assistants. This approach allows us to target individual children and groups very effectively – stretching the most able children and providing intervention for those who are struggling. We have no doubt that this has been an important factor in accelerating children’s reading progress.

Many factors have contributed to the improvements in reading shown by our results and identified by Ofsted. We’ve learnt from outstanding practice elsewhere and have benefited greatly from working within our Teaching School alliance. High quality materials – from structured phonics to quality novels – have been important building blocks. Most importantly, the team approach across the school has ensured that everyone’s input has had maximum impact.

Neil Dixon (Headteacher)
PORTLAND PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE FUTURE

Portland Primary School is of average size with one class per year group ranging from Foundation One to Year Six. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils in receipt of FSM is relatively high at over 65%. Mobility is also much higher than average and this is mainly due to housing regeneration. Portland has a number of national accreditations including the International Schools Award, Quality Mark for Basic Skills, Dyslexia Friendly Award, National Healthy Schools Status and the International Eco Schools Award.

When I was appointed Headteacher in 2004 it was clear behavioural issues were a real challenge, with a high exclusion rate. It was difficult deciding where to start. The Senior Leadership Team Members were all in temporary posts. Much effort was then put into the development of a new Senior Leadership Team which has gone from strength to strength, supporting and challenging the whole staff team to strive for excellence. Our latest Ofsted Inspection Report (July 2012) states; “The inspirational leadership of the Headteacher, alongside strong support from the leadership team sets a clear, shared vision of high expectation. Their relentless determination has led to significant improvements”. There was a positive and clear drive to improve not only academic standards but create an emotionally intelligent school community, embracing pupils, parents and staff. Distributed leadership and shared decisions were developed in order to improve outcomes for pupils.

A cross-curricular approach whilst still improving our core skills has been developed and refined over time. Enriching the curriculum through visits and visitors to Portland alongside a sound investment in ICT has been a major focus of whole school planning.

Pupils have a real say at Portland. The School Council, Pupil Progress meetings, Eco Warriors, Peer Mediators and Head Pupils have a positive impact. Ofsted states parents “overwhelmingly believe the school is a safe place to learn” and “have positive views about pupils’ behaviour”. Ofsted also observed “pupils themselves believe behaviour to be good and say that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively”.

Continuous self-evaluation and implemented changes over time have led to the following outcomes:
Three Year Averages 2011/2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Maths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keystage1</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keystage2</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our Early Years Foundation Stage literacy outcomes are improving; the EYFS Leader possesses a passionate drive to develop this further alongside PSE (personal, social and emotional). She believes with the full support of the Governors (the chair is an Early Years Consultant) that effective interventions establish the best possible foundation for very young pupils to make rapid progress and expand self-confidence as learners.

As the pupil premium has increased, investment in staffing has taken place across all three Key Stages in a balanced manner. An emphasis has been placed upon improving pupils’ speech and communication skills, particularly in our Early Years. Reading and writing skills are continuously being reviewed and provision in Keystages One and Two has never been better due to the appointment of additional teaching staff with specific responsibility for core skill improvement. In 2013 Portland achieved very well in terms of closing the gap between FSM and Non FSM pupils. Overall, there was a 0.4 gap with FSM pupils performing better!

A current priority for Portland is the expansion of co-coaching between staff in order to raise the expertise and confidence of staff. This in turn, coupled with qualitative professional development, will lead to even more precise planning, delivery and assessment, which causes raised standards.

To witness the delight of pupils having success with their learning using the latest technology or visiting specialist provision to design and make their own special product linked to stories about a subject that really grips them is sheer delight. To listen to pupils talking about the artist who helped them design 3 dimensional planets, bringing together several skills is proof that they enjoy their learning which leads to potential being realised for all.

Mary Walker
Headteacher
St John Fisher is an medium-sized primary school based in Widnes in Halton. It is a one form entry school based in two buildings on the same site, currently undergoing a single siting project. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus is above average. The school has a breakfast and an after-school club which are run by the governing body as a way of supporting our local community and also reflects our underlying philosophy of the importance of extended care for the whole child. We also have strong links with the local parish church which we believe is part of our overall success. Since my arrival as headteacher, pupil numbers have increased significantly from 138 to 227 due to our positive reputation and improved results.

Our main challenge as a school was to raise standards and in our case this meant we needed to adopt a different management approach to achieve our aim. Firstly I had to strengthen my leadership team to help me drive through the difficult changes facing me, who shared the drive and vision of high standards and excellence for all. This led to the appointment of my Deputy, Nichola Hegarty and a year later the appointment of my Assistant Head, Samantha Birchall. These appointments were crucial.

Over the next three years we worked collaboratively to change the structure of the staff, raise standards and aspirations. This was a long and difficult journey that meant making some challenging decisions however our driving force was the knowledge that the children were always at the heart of every decision that we made. This was reflected by Ofsted in our last inspection.

"The headteacher and senior leadership team have been the driving force behind the marked improvements to pupils’ achievement made during the period of staff changes. They are ably supported by staff at all levels and the governors. There is a clear sense of teamwork and all questionnaires returned by staff during the inspection were completely positive".  
Ofsted 2013

The children’s academic achievement began to reflect the positive impact of the management strategy we had implemented over the last three years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Progress Measures Percentile Rank Nationally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Subjects</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a Catholic school we have been fortunate enough to work in partnership with David Pich, our Chair and our Governors who are continually challenging and yet supportive. Cath O’Leary our Archdiocese link, Steve Nyakatwa our Local Authority Link and Sue Thornton our Standards & Assessment Advisor. These very important outside links supported us and helped sustain the continuous improvement throughout.

Attainment dipped at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011, and was only average overall. “Swift action from senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching ensured that pupils’ attainment rose sharply to above average in 2012 and continued to rise in 2013, particularly for the most-able pupils, in reading, writing and mathematics”. Ofsted 2013

I believe in distributed leadership and shared decisions to enable staff to engage with the school development. Shared responsibility has brought confidence from the most experienced to the least, encouraging them to make suggestions and decisions which leads to real and positive change.

Success would not have been possible without the collaboration and engagement of the children, the support and strengthened relationship of all stakeholders including parents and community, embedded by the open and honest approach to our work.

The cornerstone of strategic thinking and progressive leadership is continuous professional development. This has been possible by a carefully managed budget and a school development plan which has been flexible yet clear and precise reflecting the needs of the school.

The academic achievement and the children’s progress continue to be successful because we believe our curriculum provides outstanding, spiritual, social and moral development. Crucially, our partnerships to support pupils learning and particularly their artistic and physical developments are excellent and the teaching is led by our outstanding staff.

Three years ago I had the bus to drive and the vision but no passengers to travel with me. I now have a bus full of willing passengers excited about the journey ahead of us.
School Inspection Performance

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, WIRRAL

Holy Cross Catholic Primary school is a smaller than average school situated in North Birkenhead. There is a significantly higher than average number of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Visitors to our school always comment on the warm welcome and the caring, friendly ethos. The children are proud to show visitors their school. The Christian values of our motto, “Love God and Love One Another” are central to school life.

Pupil development on entry is significantly lower than the national average.

Despite the school context being described in our recent OFSTED inspection as “unique,” the school strives to accelerate learning, progress and attainment. OFSTED recognised this saying:

“The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly above average. Attainment is rising sharply and the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.”

In January of this year, the overall effectiveness of the school was judged as “Good” in all areas.

Leadership and management were judged to be extremely strong and that we have a clear vision for the school. Staff were seen to be working well as a team for the benefit of all pupils.

Recently, the management structure of the school has been re-organised with a layer of middle managers appointed to help drive the school forward. The new structure of distributed leadership ensures debate and action on all aspects of learning and the curriculum.

Holy Cross has made strategic choices in recent years which have ensured that progress has been accelerated. Pupils receive focussed teaching in Numeracy and Literacy in small classes across Key Stage 2 and in certain areas in Key Stage 1 such as phonics and reading. In this way the teaching is tailor made for the child’s level with next steps built in. In early years, a number of initiatives are providing valuable help with co-ordination and gross and fine motor control with a view to early writing.

The school Inclusion Manager has introduced person centred learning plans. This encourages the pupils who are at school action plus to take ownership of their own targets and learning. They decide on the type and level of support they require in order to achieve.

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The school has access to a specialist S.E.N. teacher. She is a valuable resource to support pupils with additional needs. We have a speech therapist visiting school each week to support pupils with language and communication issues.

In the wider school context, parent drop–in sessions are held termly to support families. Professional advice and support is available on a range of issues from health to housing.

A major factor in the improving pupil achievement, are our termly pupil progress meetings. This is much more rigorous than previously and focuses on targeting, barriers to success and how to overcome them. Our system has been recognised as an example of excellent practise by local authority personnel.

The school receives additional funding through Pupil Premium for almost all pupils. The school is generously resourced and this has made all the difference.

Funding from Pupil Premium is deployed in a variety of ways. It is used to enable a higher than average staffing ratio to facilitate small class groups and interventions. It is used for a wide variety of enrichment activities. School is able to organise visits, theatre groups, cinema trips, cookery workshops, sporting clubs and tournaments without financial demands on parents. The wider curriculum is supported through D.T, Science and I.T. workshops and art days. The older pupils are taken on a residential outdoor activities trip to Wales which is heavily subsidised by school.

The school also pays for instrumental tuition and excellent weekly music workshops led by professional musicians.

In 2013 school was awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark. We are now looking to become a Centre of Excellence for inclusion. School has recently renewed the Basic Skills Quality Mark award.

As a school we believe high quality experiences are key to developing the child as an individual and increasing their self worth. We do not accept that anything is a barrier to achievement. Holy Cross has worked very hard to move from “satisfactory” to “good” and we will continue to strive to become an “outstanding” school.

For more information please visit; www.holycross.wirral.sch.uk
Lomeshaye Junior School

‘Journey to Success’

Lomeshaye is a growing junior school of 300 pupils, serving a predominantly British Asian, Eastern European community.

Almost all pupils have English as an additional language. Socio-economic indicators for the ward place the school in the lowest 5% most deprived areas in the country. A vibrant, inclusive learning community coupled with an ethos of high expectations and challenges are paramount to Lomeshaye’s success. Aspirations are raised in a learning climate that is engaging and fun. To this end we have implemented a programme of strategic progressive developments to provide the best education for our pupils and their families, including highly effective parent partnership work; courses, workshops and tips on how to help their children at home.

Incentives to improve attendance were introduced encouraging pupils to attend every day and fixed penalty notices served on parents to reduce extended leaves. Within a year attendance moved to Ofsted’s outstanding grade. This has been sustained.

A significant turnover of staff since the 2010 Ofsted inspection presented challenges for the headteacher in ensuring a consistent approach in maintaining and raising standards. Dedication to harnessing the potential of all staff, alongside high quality training provision, has resulted in a confident, enthusiastic and passionate workforce who embraces change positively. We have a shared commitment and accountability for raising standard across school. Distributed leadership is embedded in Lomeshaye’s practice promoting staff ownership and opportunities to develop as future leaders.

The Leadership Team rigorously analyse and track the progress of individuals and groups. Teachers have full ownership of the data and use this to identify early intervention in order to target pupils’ individual needs. Linked to this is the effective use of pupil premium funds to facilitate the provision of after school booster classes delivered by all teachers for identified pupils from Yr3 to Yr6, additional 1-1 or small group tuition and a Yr6 Easter School.

Paired lesson observations are regularly and rigorously carried out by school and subject leaders. This provides staff with excellent CPD and develops a shared understanding of teaching and learning whilst ensuring a consistent approach to raising standards. Bespoke plans for improving the practice of individual teachers have been established detailing intensive support using a coaching...
model. This has resulted in consistently good teaching of which 64% is now outstanding. The triangulation of teaching and learning informs appraisal targets and CPD requirements. TAs are fully engaged in leading learning and are deployed effectively to target pupil’s specific learning needs.

During 2011/12 a radical overhaul of teaching numeracy was undertaken. The numeracy subject leader disseminated the skills and knowledge she gained from the MAST (Maths Advanced Skills Teacher) programme, delivered guided reasoning sessions for peer observation and provided support for colleagues who were keen to develop their own practice. Short, weekly assessments are administered from which groups across KS2 are identified according to gaps in their learning and taught intensively with pupils at the same level. Basic key skills are a priority with non-negotiables developed for each year group. Half termly mentoring sessions enable every child to discuss their progress and next steps target with their teacher. Pupils develop a greater understanding of their individual achievements and become more motivated to achieve further. These strategies provide highly personalised learning opportunities. Coupled with this, lesson study enables teachers to work in triads, analysing and improving their practice. This has been effective in highlighting the barriers to learning for some pupils and informs future teaching plans and strategies. Developing a shared vision for reading has impacted significantly on standards. Accelerated progress is evident due to the new strategies implemented: intensive whole school phonics learning, targeted individual readers, improved quality of teaching in guided reading sessions and a focus on comprehension skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reading L4+</th>
<th>Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar L4+</th>
<th>L5</th>
<th>Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar L5</th>
<th>Numeracy L4+</th>
<th>L5</th>
<th>L6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have a rich and vibrant curriculum developed by our pupils with opportunities to embed the skills required for the workplace through independent, investigative activities and enterprise themes. We endeavour to ensure that children leave Lomeshaye with a positive disposition for the wider, diverse community and for learning, so that they become responsible citizens and life-long learners.

Angela Pleasants, Head teacher
This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
PUPILS in Gloucestershire have excelled in their SATs exams once again, with results putting the county above the national average in almost every area.

The confirmed Key Stage Two results for 2013 show that Gloucestershire is in the top third of councils nationally – 27th out of 150 local authorities. In Gloucestershire, 79 per cent of pupils achieved level four and above (the expected level) in all three areas – reading, writing and maths – compared to a national average of 76 per cent.

Nationally, 86 per cent of pupils achieved level four and above in reading, while 88 per cent of pupils in Gloucestershire achieved that level. In writing, the county figure was 86 per cent compared to 84 per cent nationally, and in maths, 86 per cent of Gloucestershire pupils achieved the expected level, compared to a national average of 85 per cent.

At Innsworth Junior School, in Rookery Road, 91 per cent of the 33 eligible pupils reached level four or above in reading, maths and writing. Furthermore 33 per cent achieved level five while only three per cent got level three or less.

Headteacher Lynfa Jenkins said: “We are very pleased. When the pupils get to Year 6 they know exactly what is going on and they clue into it, they drive the success. It is a culmination of hard work by pupils, staff and parents.”

At Field Court Junior School in Quedgeley, 93 per cent of the 74 pupils got level four or above in reading, maths and writing, 41 per cent achieved level five while no pupil got below level three.

Kelly Armstrong, headteacher at the school, said: “We were expecting good results and the pupils delivered. We just want the best for our children and they have all done really well.”

Of the 32 eligible pupils at Barnwood Church of England Primary School, 91 per cent achieved level four or above in reading, maths and writing.

Furthermore 28 per cent achieved level five or above.

Anne Davies, headteacher, said: “We are delighted. It has been a real team effort and we have been working really hard. It is nice to feature high up in the league tables but this is a positive effect of the work we do with our children. The focus is all on them.”

At Harewood Junior School in Tuffley 91 per cent of the 75 eligible pupils achieved level four or above, while 28 per cent achieved level five. Headteacher Andrea Mills said: “We are very pleased with the results.”

At Cashes Green Primary School in Stroud 88 per cent of the 17 eligible pupils achieved level four or above in reading and maths tests and writing while 24 per cent achieved level five.

Meg Dawson, headteacher, said: “Everyone at the school is extremely pleased. We are not all about the results. We want the children to experience a broad curriculum and we want them to enjoy their learning and be motivated, which they are.”

County councillor Paul McLain, cabinet member for children and young people, said: “It is fantastic news that, once again, Gloucestershire’s results are among the very best in the country and the south west. Top marks to pupils and parents for all of the hard work they are putting in, and to our schools, which work so hard to help children reach their potential.”
Top Results for Dorset in KS2 SATs

Headteachers in Dorset are ‘very pleased’ with primary school performance tables released today.

The figures revealed some top results in the league tables with teachers saying progress is being made in the county.

The number of 11-year-olds reaching the government’s required standard remains high in Dorset, according to the tables published by the Department of Education.

Some teachers are in favour of the national Scholastic Assessment Tests (SATs) taken by 10 and 11-year-olds in English and maths, while others say the figures released don’t provide a full picture of a school’s achievements.

Ofsted revealed that Dorset features 14th on a list which gives the percentages of pupils attending good or outstanding primary schools by local authority area in England. The table shows that 89 per cent of pupils in the county attend good or outstanding schools. Darlington is at the top with 97 per cent.

Jyotsna Chaffey, headteacher at Thornear’s School, Litton Cheney, said these exams were ‘useful’ but did not provide a full picture of pupil achievement.

She said she was ‘really pleased’ with their results despite not matching last year’s success, when the school scored 100 per cent in each criteria.

The criteria scores how much progress pupils have made and how many pupils have reached the national average Level 4.

Ms Chaffey said: “This year we are one of only seven schools in Dorset, a total of 91 schools, in which all children made at least two levels or more progress in reading, writing and maths.”

Two levels progress is the nationally expected level.

She added: “We are a small school so it just depends very often on the particular cohort and how competitive they are. I think these exams are very useful as one of the ways to measure how children get on at primary school. There are of course other factors.”

Darren Marklew, vice principal at the Osprey Quay campus of the Isle of Portland Aldridge Community Academy (IPACA), said they were ‘very pleased in the significant improvement in all areas’.

The figures, which revealed results for the whole Academy, recorded a 78 per cent achieving Level 4 or above in the maths test, with 64 per cent achieving Level 4 or above in reading and maths tests and in writing.

Mr Marklew said that this previously stood at only 42 per cent achieving Level 4 or above since IPACA was formed on Portland.

“We are pleased with the significant improvements in all areas. We are around the national average and a little below in some areas and of course all schools want to do...
better and get nearer to 100 per cent but we are pleased with the improvements in the past year.”

He added: “It is important for us to see an increase in the number of children making at least two levels progress in maths, reading and writing. We believe in a skills based curriculum which allows children to develop and progress and this is most important aspect for us so they can then go on to strive for the best GCSE results.”

Some of best in country

Dorset has some of the best schools in the country, according to a new report.

Ofsted’s annual report lists authorities according to the percentage of pupils attending schools ranked good or outstanding by inspectors.

The county is ranked 37th out of 151 for secondary pupils at 86 per cent and 14th for primary pupils with 89 per cent.

The national average is 74 per cent and 78 per cent respectively.

But Dorset County Council is being urged to close the gap between affluent and poorer pupils.

The report states: “Although the attainment of all children in the South West needs to rise to ensure they have the best chance in life, the very low attainment of children eligible for free school meals is a real concern.

“In Dorset, barely one quarter of pupils eligible for free school meals achieved five good GCSEs with English and mathematics, well below the England level of similar pupils. In the South Dorset parliamentary constituency, pupils eligible for free school meals performed less well than similar pupils nationally in all secondary schools.”

And the report says, however, that schools previously judged good or even outstanding at their last inspection located in highly ranked local authorities should not be complacent.

Examination and test results for such schools suggest that not all are maintaining previously high standards and as such are being identified for re-inspection.

For example, between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013, 16 previously outstanding schools in Dorset were re-inspected as a result of declining test and examination results.

Of these, 12 were no longer judged to be outstanding, with only four maintaining their outstanding status.

Of 17 previously good schools inspected in the same local authority area in the same period, five had declined and only two had improved to become outstanding.

Meanwhile, representatives of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Schools have descended on Bournemouth after the borough was ranked near the bottom of tables produced by inspection body Ofsted.

They will report back to the Chief Inspector of Schools Sir Michael Wilshaw and the results will be published in January.

The top secondary school areas in the country include Bath, Camden and Kensington and Chelsea with the Isle of Wight at the bottom of the table.

For primary schools, Darlington has the best figures with Wolverhampton at the bottom of the pile.
STOKENCHURCH PRIMARY

KEYS TO SUCCESS AT STOKENCHURCH PRIMARY

Stokenchurch, a large primary with over 550 pupils is an outstanding school and has been graded as such at two consecutive Ofsted inspections in 2008 and in 2013 under the new framework. There are many reasons why we believe our school has continued to be so successful through a period of rapid growth and significant change.

‘Key amongst them are the clear-thinking and aspirational leadership, consistently very effective teaching and exceptionally positive attitudes amongst pupils. This potent mix ensures that pupils make excellent progress academically and in their personal development.’

Ofsted 2008

Our ethos at the heart of all we do

All-round personal development is a well-established feature of the school. Parents and carers are keen to talk about the way in which the school is able to help pupils to become confident, whether in learning or in the many excellent opportunities to take on leadership roles, as with the very active school council, prefect and house captain roles and more recent introduction of head boy and head girl posts.

Our Teaching and Learning policy captures the very essence of our ethos celebrating the impact we have as staff, ‘who make the difference’, whilst embracing the challenge that teaching does not always imply learning will take place! We aim to ensure that every day for every child there is a climate for learning with the teacher as a person, their body language and relationships, the most valuable resource in any classroom. The outstanding teacher is the one who ‘makes you feel clever’. In our school we all believe that every child can be successful.

‘This very large primary school has established a warm family atmosphere where pupils thrive and develop outstanding behaviour and attitudes. They show respect to everyone and know how to stay safe…each pupil is known and valued as an individual. This is the basis for the very high expectations demonstrated across every aspect of school life.’

Ofsted 2013

Learning through performance – stretching horizons

Achievement at Stokenchurch is outstanding. Pupils make rapid progress from their starting points, and attain high standards. Underpinning pupil achievement we passionately believe in providing a ‘stage’ for pupils (all of whom we
believe are talented) to emerge and grow and gain in confidence and stature. Our equally talented staff not only care, support and encourage, instilling the confidence needed to succeed, but also take risks in their desire to challenge our children believing that they will rise to the highest expectations.

For example this year: Children in Year 5 sang and acted alongside professionals on stage in the stunning Wormsley estate in a community Opera ‘Road Rage’. Orlando Gough (composer) and Richard Stilgoe (librettist) commissioned by Garsington Opera wrote a piece for a cast of 150 children, young people and adults from the area to perform alongside professional singers and musicians.

Children in Year 6 worked on a ‘live’ advertising project designing a poster for the new BMW electric car. The ads had to meet the brief and had to be ‘catchy’. Shortlisted children were then invited to pitch their ideas - true apprentice board room style!

Our choir performed at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the ‘Power of Music Echoes 5 Concert’ a musical extravaganza involving 1,950 children from 59 Buckingham schools. The opportunity to perform in such a prestigious venue demonstrates the importance we attach to creativity in learning and of course providing lifelong memories to cherish.

“The very rich and exciting curriculum (both within the school day and beyond) provides outstanding opportunities for pupils to experience learning in real-life situations and to develop confidence by being involved in prestigious events.”

Ofsted 2013

Embracing change creatively

We embrace all new national initiatives positively and their successful implementation has always been rooted in our own school context seeking to explore their potential in a creative and forward thinking manner. In response to the introduction of PPA we creatively introduced French, ICT and P.E. specialisms to provide an enhanced provision for children. Working as a whole Year team, including teaching assistants, staff are able to plan, prepare and assess together, affording more opportunity for specialisms and experience to be shared whilst ensuring a greater consistency of standards.

A new feature of our Parents’ Evenings has been the attendance of our HLTA’s who greet parents as they arrive, hand over our Progress Chart (which plots pupil achievement and progress alongside effort and approach to areas of school life) and maintain the flow of the evening.

They may answer questions of a general nature about the Progress Chart or other aspects of school life such as SEN programmes, the role of an LSA working with a parent’s child or First Aid. The aim is to support the communication flow of the evening as well as ensure more time is afforded to discussion of progress between teacher and parent within their allotted appointment time.

Andrew White Headteacher of Stokenchurch Primary School
Woodlands Park Primary School is a larger than average primary school with 312 children located in Ivybridge, Devon. The children come from a wide variety of backgrounds and our intake is broadly average in ability. The percentage of free school meals is below the national average and a similar picture exists for our special needs pupils.

Historically the school’s performance data has been in line and at times above the national average in both Key stages 1 and 2. However, in spite of regular monitoring and evaluation, a previously good inspection, a hard working staff and supportive parents and governors our performance had levelled off.

What was needed?

Last November we booked a ‘mini inspection’ using two local authority advisors for a day. Lesson observations, a scrutiny of exercise books and subject leader interviews all took place with feedback to staff and a report produced. Although the report largely confirmed our judgements, one unintended finding was the way in which some of our children were over dependent on the Teaching Assistants. To remedy this, we employed an experienced learning coach to work with all our Teaching Assistants over two terms with the aim of further developing their questioning skills to promote greater pupil autonomy. To date, this has had a significant impact upon the pupils, who are now less reliant on adult support and are engaging with their learning more effectively.

Another factor that led to improved standards over the year has been the reorganisation of our daily intervention groups. Previously, these were mainly led by our Teaching Assistants on a six week cycle. A radical shift took place and the class teachers started to lead the intervention groups at the beginning of each day for 20 minutes, preparing the under achieving pupils for the learning ahead. The Teaching Assistants were delegated to register pupils and support the early morning activities in the classes. Observations of the past term have revealed that pupils in receipt of intervention, engage more readily in whole class learning and are better prepared for the introduction of new concepts which they had rehearsed prior to the lesson.
Using our Pupil Premium money has also enabled us to release class teachers to work with under achieving groups in narrowing the achievement gap. Developing a closer bond through smaller group work has enabled staff to track progress more closely and to identify gaps in learning as quickly as possible. Our results show improvements and will continue this year. This autumn, we have also employed an early years literacy specialist to provide additional support in Key Stage 1. Our aim is to quickly tackle potential underachievement before vulnerable pupils reach Key Stage 2.

To ensure that our more able groups are effectively challenged, we have also strengthened our teaching by using staff expertise in English and Maths. Our improved Level 5 results reflect better deployment of staff and our aim is to continue this in 2014. We are also aiming to develop closer links with the Maths and English department at the local Community College.

**Levels 4, 5 and 6**

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<td></td>
<td>Level 6: 9%</td>
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As with many schools, our performance management targets and termly class progress reviews have been sharply focussed on specific groups. Staff are acutely aware of their accountability for pupil progress and we share and discuss the key pages of the Raiseonline report every Autumn. This has further helped to reinforce the message that we are ‘in this together’ and it’s not just down to the Year 6 teachers to push up standards!

**Developing Middle Leaders**

The drive to improve the school over the past few years has also involved developing the middle leaders. They have been expected to report on the attainment and progress across the school, not only to the Governing Body but also to our link advisors when they visit. Challenging dialogue has helped to refine their ideas and comprehend the importance of accountability and the next steps forward.

Fortnightly monitoring by middle leaders, across and within phase groups has also helped to ensure greater consistency in both marking and approaches to teaching which is helping to raise standards in all phases in the school.

**Where next?**

With the success of the coaching training, we are now running a coaching project for Year 6 pupils working with Year 3 pupils. Our aim is to further engage our under achieving pupils by providing student mentors to enhance their love of learning.

We are really excited by this project and look forward to the unfolding results!

**Heather Hanrott, Headteacher**
In October 2013 we celebrated our 40th birthday – a monumental event which was commemorated by an amazing balloon release, circus performers and a party.

Our school has come a long way in those 40 years and now serves a diverse catchment area. The majority of our pupils are from White British backgrounds but we now have an increased number of children from a variety of worldwide cultures. The proportion of children supported at School Action is slightly higher than the National Average but those pupils supported at School Action Plus or with a statement of SEN are below the National Average.

Our most recent Ofsted in July 2012 endorsed our belief that we are a good school with some outstanding features.

Our attainment at the end of KS2 is consistently good and higher than the National Average. The underlying reason for this our commitment, dedication and creativity from teachers and support staff. Teaching at Redland School is innovative, exciting and fun which engages our children. We have an inventive curriculum which is regularly reviewed and teachers are encouraged to make adaptations developing stimulating learning experiences which enthuse teachers and children alike.

We have invested heavily in increasing the number of support staff which has strengthened our team. Our Teaching Assistants lead intervention groups, support teachers in the classroom and implement IEPs where necessary contributing to the success of our school.

We are lucky enough to employ 2 part-time teachers who liaise with class teachers in providing small group work targeting children across KS2. From January each year our two Yr.5/6 classes are split into four groups (3 x Yr.6 and one Yr.5 group) which enable teachers to target their teaching more closely. We believe that this focussed support of ALL Yr.6 children is a major contributory factor to the overall success of our school. These Yr.6 Learning Groups enable a precise teaching focus and allow the teachers and Teaching Assistants to plan lessons and activities which are tailored to the needs of children.

The motto for our children is “We all say we can and we do!”...this reflects the attitude and approach to school life for our children. Visitors always comment on the warmth, friendliness, politeness and energy our children exhibit. Here at Redland we firmly adhere to the philosophy – “The whole rounded child”. We nurture a love of learning, and inquisitiveness. Children here understand tolerance, acceptance and fairness.

In November we had our Yr.6 leavers’ party, appropriately titled ‘Graduation’! This was a huge success and hence teachers and children alike.

In January 2014, I will have been at Redland School for 29 years – initially as Deputy Headteacher and then Headteacher for the past 16 years.

I can honestly say I have seen our school blossom due to the monumental effort, enthusiasm and dedication of all our staff.

Our school has many great attributes which have been recognised by awards, grants and government initiatives. Redland School is a vibrant and welcoming learning environment, in which children flourish!!
When walking into Redland School you are immediately struck by the positive atmosphere. Our greatest belief is that HAPPY CHILDREN LEARN! Our children see US as adults, working together, showing each other respect and actually enjoying being teachers and helping children fulfil their potential. As adults and leaders within our school, our pupils see US having fun and enjoying being part of Redland School.

Every aspect of school life is important. Yes, we achieve excellent results in the KS1 and KS2 SATs tests. However, we also excel in many other areas. Sporting activities and a competitive approach to tournaments has allowed us to build up an impressive silverware collection!! Our choir is famous in the town for their performances in retirement homes, stores and local town events.

Children bring into school all their awards, accolades and achievements from clubs out of school. It is impressive to see so many young talented children sharing and showing their skills, and in turn encouraging their peers to join clubs out of school.

As a school, our amazing staff run clubs either at lunchtimes or after school……….at the last count 16 different clubs!! They are all well attended and greatly appreciated by both the children and parents.

We have many accredited awards to our name and our foyer is a celebration of our success and achievements. Redland School has achieved Gold Arts Mark, the Becta Award, Healthy Schools, Bristol Standard, Every Child Counts, International Schools Award, and Leadership Host School. We support other schools within the Wiltshire authority. I am also an L.L.E. (Local Leader of Education), working in schools and this in turn offers our staff the opportunity to share and showcase their leadership skills and teaching expertise.

As educators we are under constant pressure to take on government initiatives and changes. As a school we know ourselves well enough to be selective and not jump on every bandwagon!!!!

In January 2014, I will have been at Redland School for 29 years – initially as Deputy Headteacher and then Headteacher for the past 16 years.

I can honestly say I have seen our school blossom due to the monumental effort, enthusiasm and dedication of all our staff.

For more information on Redland School please visit;

www.redlandschool.co.uk

Hilary Lambert – Headteacher
St Nicholas’ is a popular, growing and diverse Oxford City School. The School has grown from 180 pupils in 2000, 287 in 2006 to 451 in 2013. We have a nursery class and an Autism Base. 47% of our children are from minority ethnic groups and 29% have English as an additional language. 26% are on the SEN register.

The school has grown dramatically due to the Oxford City re organisation from middle to primary schools.

In 2013, we reviewed our values and vision. Our vision statement ‘Live, Love, Learn and Be Happy’ is displayed prominently around the school.

We were inspected in March 2012. Overall effectiveness was satisfactory with some good features. Inspectors recognised that our pupil profile is particularly challenging and attainment is lower than national. Key issues were to:

- Raise achievement by improving teaching and learning.
- Teachers set clear learning intentions so that pupils know what they have to learn.
- Marking always identifies how well pupils are working towards their targets.
- Strengthen further the impact of leadership and management by:
- Developing the Governing Body’s role in evaluating the work of the school.

We had 18 months to move the school from satisfactory to good.

Our next inspection would be by the end of 2013. We needed to bring the school together showing a consistency throughout, the Governors and senior leaders needed to be robust and show rigour. All staff had training on “Everyone a leader”. This provided the staff with an opportunity to play a lead role in the strategic planning of the school.

The first task was to re structure the senior leadership of the school. The school had grown and that had meant new roles being developed to support that growth.

The governors became fully involved with school life by understanding their role and questioning senior leaders on school improvement and continually being critical friends.

Whole class teaching needed to be improved to ensure that more lessons were deemed to be good or outstanding to enable all children to make progress thus narrowing the gap.

Assessment for learning played an important role within the school. A lead teacher trained the staff in a rigorous system of assessing all pupils during whole class teaching to ensure a consistency of approach from all staff.

We needed to improve our marking policy and therefore a senior leader completed training in next step marking. This training was then implemented in all subjects so that children were clear about their targets.

Our system of tracking every child was good but could be improved therefore analysis of data became a 6 weekly task instead of termly.
Intervention groups were analysed and re visited to see if they were really making a difference and narrowing the gap for our vulnerable learners. Were they value for money?

We introduced Project X Code to support year 1 and 2 readers and in particular EAL readers, this had a significant impact on their progress.

SATs results

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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>98.3</td>
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Ofsted revisited the school in October 2013 and said:

“Staff and senior leaders ensure that subject areas are well organised to give pupils a broad range of experiences that promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.”

“Members of the governing body know where the school’s strengths and weaknesses lie. They hold the school to account and work well in partnership with the head teacher and staff to drive the school forward.”

“All groups of pupils, including pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding, those learning English as an additional language and those who find learning more difficult, make good progress because they are interested in their learning.”

We are proud of our School and the following shows some of the many important features of St Nicholas’.

The School Council is a very good example of this in practice, with each class having a representative who is able and willing to put forward the views of their class community. Ideas are expressed thoughtfully and respectfully. New initiatives are implemented and their effectiveness reflected upon.

48% of our pupils are from minority ethnic groups and this brings a wealth of shared experiences for all children. It enables children and adults to learn to respect each other regardless of race and religion, we are very proud of our school. The school has a fantastic relationship with many partnership schools including St Clare’s Baccalaureate, Oxford High School, Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University and The Cherwell School with the School Direct programme.

The Friends of St. Nicholas’ School organise a large number of events that enrich the life of the school community. The School has 24 after school clubs running every week including knitting graffiti, karate, scrabble and film club, these clubs show the enriched curriculum which we believe supports the learning. Inclusion is at the heart of our school and this was affirmed by receiving the International Award.

The children have been immersed into many different cultures and religions which enriches our school life.
Weston Mill Community School is a larger than average primary school situated in the heart of Plymouth. The vast majority of our pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of children eligible for pupil premium is significantly higher than that found nationally. The number of children supported for special educational needs is broadly in line with those nationally overall.

Our vision is to provide a caring and supportive atmosphere where our school community work together to enable our children to achieve the skills and knowledge needed to thrive and excel in life. We are dedicated to ensuring that our children are capable, ambitious, enthusiastic, self motivated, inspired and are able to celebrate their individuality. These qualities form the basis of our school logo, rewards and incentives and form a strong foundation of high expectations.

Our school is a positive place to be, the pupils are happy, confident and safe. They are polite and enthusiastic in their learning, enjoy each other’s company and behave well.

Having recently joined the school as the Headteacher, it was apparent that the school was struggling and key issues were identified and a momentum of change begun. In 2010 Ofsted placed the school into ‘Special Measures’. There was recognition of the changes already made, but further development of Middle Leadership and the use of data to impact on rapid and sustained progress, was required.

Professional support was provided to the Leadership team and Governors, as well as clear definitions of roles and responsibilities. A clear process and systematic, termly approach towards monitoring, review and target setting and the ensuring of consistency in all areas was developed. Priority was given to ensuring that Interventions and support programmes were delivering outcomes with hard and soft data. Support staff received additional training and were given greater autonomy in supporting children, as well as the recognition that they are partners in learning development. Following individual, paired and team monitoring, the leadership team review progress and attainment and evaluate their areas of responsibility, setting new targets for the following term. This dynamic process is fundamental to our success as has resulted in the rapid improvement our school has made.
Key whole school initiatives including Read Write Inc and Big Write were introduced, as well as changing most aspects of planning, classroom organisation, support staff organisation and increasing the importance of parental engagement. A rapid increase in progress as well as long term sustainability were key. Communicating change and expectations were included in regular staff, team and leadership meetings.

Teacher professional development was paramount, with enhanced expectations leading to teachers becoming accountable for the school targets as well as their class. Performance management is effective with targeted support given to teachers and support staff to enhance practice. The resulting change in school culture from being class focussed to school-focused was significant, and has led to our staff becoming driven and determined to achieve better outcomes for all children.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved with consistently good and often outstanding teaching. Progress and attainment have improved with high expectations. Our children have adopted a ‘can do’ approach to learning, and teachers plan individually, and in teams, to ensure that planning meets the needs of all pupils.

Our improved performance has been driven by the children themselves. They enjoy their learning, and now demonstrate the capacity to explain what outstanding teaching and learning is for them. Challenge in learning and feedback from our children is a key part of our self evaluation.

In less than two years we acquired our ‘Good’ Ofsted grade. We achieved this by ensuring that all stakeholders recognised their importance in moving the school forward. The children, governors, parents, teachers and the head, acknowledged that every single person had an important and relevant part to play in transforming the school. Clear structures, awareness of the importance of learning, recognising outstanding teaching, clear communication and keeping the children at the centre ensured that progress was accelerated. Our hard working and dedicated team have ensured that we have improved our capacity to move the school to ‘Outstanding’ and we are looking forward to an exciting future.

Alison Nettleship, Headteacher of Weston Mill Community Primary School.
Nonington Church of England Primary School

A Small School with a Big Vision

There has been a school at Nonington for nearly 200 years, serving a small, rural community and the surrounding villages. Situated in what was once the Kent coalfield, children enter the school with a wide range of abilities and needs. All classes are mixed-age and the adult to child ratio is 1:7, with fantastically committed teachers and support staff.

As an inclusive church school, everything starts with love. The children and staff use the word with ease – everyone understands that the love we share is that for all humanity – caritas. There is something very compelling (as well as unusual) about a Year 6 boy talking about how he has looked after a reception child because of this love. Our latest Ofsted report highlights the fact that ‘relationships across the school are very strong’. This leads to excellent learning attitudes and shared enthusiasm for learning. Relationships are key to everything we do – and the mutual respect and care is what forms the basis of the excellent progress that all learners make.

Four years ago we completely changed our methodology of teaching. We stopped having medium term plans and moved to a system that uses a hierarchy of skills that ensures that every child does what he or she needs to do on any given day. This means that the class teachers are free to choose the subject matter that is used to drive learning rather than being tied into a rigid system of ‘topics’. By allowing the teachers to be creative in their planning, catering for individual needs and interests, the progress that all children make is enhanced. This includes vulnerable groups: the inspection report recognises that there is no gap between those children eligible for pupil premium and those who are not. Data shows that those with special needs or disabilities make good or outstanding progress in all areas.

Every child has a ‘red folder’ which lists the objectives that need to be covered for every sub-level in each element of a subject (e.g. Using and applying Maths, Number and Algebra etc.). This allows the children to have ownership of their progress as they plot their learning journey through the folder. Monitoring is made simple by being able to look in the red folder, find a dated completed objective, and then refer to the child’s work book to find the relevant pieces of work. Governors undertake this task as part of their regular visits to the school, and this intimate knowledge of teaching and learning contributed to governance being judged outstanding.

Nonington does so much more than merely prepare children for the academic rigours of secondary school. When pupils leave here they have high levels of self-advocacy; the ability to care for and support others; a social conscience which makes them fight for truth and justice; all underpinned by a delight in learning and a constant drive to achieve to their potential.

It is a privilege to work in such an environment.

Tobin Wallace-Sims, Headteacher
Tracking is carried out six times per year and, because assessment is constantly happening through the red folders, it is simple for teachers to show progress even within a sub-level. Children have a very clear picture of what they need to do to improve and, because the curriculum is personalised, children are able to celebrate their own and others’ achievements without comparing themselves unfavourably with others.

The School Plan is a working document, with each Ofsted aspect covered, and this is what governors monitor, meaning that individual governors can speak with confidence about every part of the school’s life.

Parents and carers are always welcome in school: the ‘open door’ policy is a reality, with the Family Liaison Officer working closely with families to ensure that every aspect of a child’s life is the best it can possibly be. The children describe the school as one big family, and this includes all those with whom we come into contact. Other schools, local residents, and the church form part of our community, and children have been involved in outreach work such as raising money to restore the war memorials in the churchyard.

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It is a privilege to work in such an environment.

Tobin Wallace-Sims, Headteacher
Southbourne Junior School is a mid sized Junior school sharing an extensive site with an Infant School. With over 200 pupils, the school has a higher than average proportion of pupils from Traveller backgrounds all other pupils are generally of white British descent.

I took over the school as Headteacher in September 2012, having spent many years previously as the Deputy Headteacher at the school. In the year prior to my appointment, I was fortunate enough to spend a year job sharing with the previous Headteacher which provided me with valuable time to look more closely at Teaching and Learning across the school. As a school we have always believed that the curriculum and educational experience we offer the children should be at the heart of all we do and have created a bespoke curriculum over a number of years.

A key strength of the school, upon my appointment as Headteacher, was its creative and engaging curriculum that was offered and a staff team who were vibrant and willing to experiment with new ideas. Despite this the school had struggled to move writing levels forward for a number of years and many staff were unaware of current educational trends and developments which would help us achieve the expected progress for the pupils. One of my key tasks was to create a senior management team that would see all the positives happening in the school, but that could also look for new ways forward and be proactive in tackling any issues. I appointed a new Deputy head from another local authority and an Inclusion leader and retained an assistant head, which immediately broadened the range of experience and skills the staff team had to offer.

As a Senior Management team we felt that the injection of some more modern, exciting teaching methods were the key to moving learning forward for the pupils and further developing the experiences we offer. Our first task was to revisit the school aims as a whole staff and identify the new school vision. The aims were rewritten by the team and then presented to a group of pupils, who also gave their input, resulting in the creation of our new logo. ACHIEVE was launched across the school and promoted values that we believe to be vital to a successful educational environment, we built these into all assemblies and PSHE lessons so that they became quickly embedded and known to all.

Performance management has been a key tool in improving the quality of teaching and learning. This has been approached as a supportive tool to move staff forward. We introduced a system which triangulated evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny and pupil progress data meetings. This enabled us to have a good picture of the strengths and areas for development of each individual member of staff and to create a CPD programme tailored to meet the needs of each.

The impact of this has been huge, with the whole staff using and developing the idea of ‘learning journeys’ as a means of planning clear sequences of lessons, which are planned to not only meet the statuary requirements but to also excite and inspire our pupils. They begin with an initial assessment of pupils’ understanding in the area of learning followed by a series of learning experiences planned to build upon this starting point, tailored to individual needs. This has been coupled with a focus upon self assessment for pupils and the two together have resulted in pupils having more ownership over their development and a better understanding of themselves as learners. It has also brought about rapid gains in progress in writing and has also been rolled out successfully in other subject areas. This was highlighted by Ofsted in our recent inspection.

This development of our creative curriculum has led to changes in the topics we offer, with staff looking to modernise the curriculum and make it relevant for young learners of today. At times this has been a testing journey and not all staff have been prepared to meet the challenge. However a year on, we have a team with some new members, all of which are committed to our vision and making a difference for our pupils. This was recognised in our recent Inspection (November 2013) in which the school was graded good with many outstanding features. I am extremely proud of both staff and pupils and look forward to further developing our school as part of a fantastic team.

For more information please visit: www.southbournejuniors.co.uk
Performance management has been a key tool in improving the quality of teaching and learning. This has been approached as a supportive tool to move staff forward. We introduced a system which triangulated evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny and pupil progress data meetings. This enabled us to have a good picture of the strengths and areas for development of each individual member of staff and to create a CPD programme tailored to meet the needs of each.

The impact of this has been huge, with the whole staff using and developing the idea of ‘learning journeys’ as a means of planning clear sequences of lessons, which are planned to not only meet the statutory requirements but to also excite and inspire our pupils.

They begin with a initial assessment of pupils’ understanding in the area of learning followed by a series of learning experiences planned to build upon this starting point, tailored to individual needs. This has been coupled with a focus upon self assessment for pupils and the two together have resulted in pupils having more ownership over their development and a better understanding of themselves as learners. It has also brought about rapid gains in progress in writing and has also been rolled out successfully in other subject areas. This was highlighted by Ofsted in our recent inspection.

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School Inspection Performance

ST. ALBANS ROAD INFANT/ NURSERY SCHOOL

“We are ‘Good’ - Next step ‘Outstanding’”

Karen Major, Headteacher at St. Albans Road Infant/Nursery School

St. Albans Road is a large infant school with around 300 children situated in the town of Dartford, Kent. It serves a wide area with a small but significant number of pupils living some distance from the school.

Children typically start school with skills below those expected and a small but significant proportion start with extremely low skills. Many of our children have poor social and communication skills which can be intensified by poor attendance, challenging behaviour and difficult home lives. We have a designated member of staff who works hard to develop excellent relationships with our families in order to deal with any issues or concerns as soon as they arise. At the beginning of the school year, when a child joins our Nursery or Reception classes, the class teachers meet with parents during a home visit session. This ensures we have an understanding of the family background and enables us to identify any concerns or potential support that maybe required from the outset.

In September 2011 the school was rated satisfactory by Ofsted, a position none of us felt we wanted. A lot of hard work has gone into raising expectations of everybody. So we are thrilled with the most recent outcome. We are now focused on the road to outstanding…

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We have a very strong teaching team. Each class has a teacher and full time teaching assistant. We are particularly proud of the contribution our teaching assistants make to pupils learning. “Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the good learning taking place” (Ofsted 2013). At St. Albans Road we recognise the contribution from all adults in the school and staff feel very valued and part of a team. On a weekly basis a member of staff is presented with an ‘apple’ brooch that they wear for the week celebrating contributions to the school over and above what is expected.
Through the hard work and dedication of all staff we have ensured that our pupils make at least good progress. In 2013 attainment was above National average in all areas.

Many languages are spoken in the school and some enter with little or no knowledge of the English language. In order to support these children and their families we have dedicated staff who liaise with them from the minute they first enter the school. For some children this is their first ever experience of school and can be very frightening when everyone else is talking in a different language. With care and support children quickly pick up the English language. “Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well and the high focus on phonics is improving their language skills rapidly…” (Ofsted 2013).

Government match funding was used to implement the Letters and Sounds phonics scheme across all year groups including the Nursery. The consistent teaching of phonics has been fundamental to the success, not only of the phonic screening results in Year One (above national average 2 years running) but also of the reading and writing results at the end of Key Stage One. Other initiatives that have been key to our success have been focused comprehension sessions and the introduction of ‘Big Talk, Big Write’.

Two years ago we reviewed our behaviour policy to reward those children who were doing the right thing. We introduced a traffic light system with the phrase ‘we are green to go and ready to learn!’ This was quickly taken on board by children and parents! The children work towards being green all day which means they are behaving in a polite and respectful way and at the end of the day they get a stamp. When they have filled their card with twenty stamps they come to the Headteacher for a prize, their completed card and prize then go home for further celebration. One of the prizes last year for filling six cards was tea and cakes with the Headteacher, with a parent being invited – this was extremely popular! This behaviour system has really contributed to a calm and purposeful learning environment.

Overall our journey over the last five years has been achieved through the hard work, commitment and high expectations of all our staff.

As it says in the song
“We have high hopes… ..whoops there goes another rubber tree plant!!”
Filton Hill Primary School serves the urban area of Filton, which has much in common with schools located in North Bristol in terms of higher deprivation, attitudes to learning and low attendance. This is in contrast with the majority of the rest of schools in South Gloucestershire. Filton currently has some of the highest levels of unemployment and many pupils come from challenging family circumstances. A third of the pupils receive free school meals and a high percentage comes from a small number of large families.

The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is a little over half the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils join the Reception class with skill levels that are much lower than expected for their age. This is particularly so in the areas of personal development, and communication and language skills. From analysing the EYFS data it became clear the majority of the pupils also lacked basic Knowledge and Understanding of the world. The lack of these key experiences was hindering their ability to develop their literacy skills later on, especially in writing.

A key factor in our success is the introduction of the Creative Curriculum and the decision to budget for extra school trips and experiences. The teachers provide interesting, meaningful and relevant opportunities for pupils and ensure they are motivated and engaged with an enthusiastic attitude to learning.

Another important factor has been to develop pupils’ confidence about their learning and this includes encouraging their independence. Last year we introduced seven animals with different learning characteristics such as perseverance and this approach has worked very well with the children taking more responsibility for their own learning.

The introduction of the Pupil Premium has enabled us to fund a variety of support; we offer free breakfast (to the FSM pupils) and this ensures they arrive on time and have eaten before learning. We have also employed a Drama Therapist, which means the more vulnerable children have the emotional support they need. A hungry and unhappy child is never going to be enthusiastic about long division!
The school has been judged ‘Good’ during the last two inspections and each time the inspectors have been impressed with the positive atmosphere of the school. The personal relationships are crucial for the quality of learning and the children know they are listened to and respected.

The school supports vulnerable groups well, but a large section of each class sits just below expectations and also need that specific support to catch up with their peers. We moved the majority of support groups to the afternoons in order for the pupils to continue to experience quality first teaching in the mornings. The interventions are sharp, focussed and progress is monitored very closely. The school employs a SENCo 3 days a week, who manages a team of highly skilled TAs. The children currently work in ability groups for phonics and numeracy in KS2.

The school encourages the parents to help the children to develop literacy skills and for several years now we have asked parents to read with their child 5 times a week, as their main homework. The children, who achieve this, receive a reward at the end of term and we also suggest projects, the families can work on together, rather than reams of worksheets.

I believe a leader cannot work in isolation and it is very important to have strong shared leadership and trust members of staff with key initiatives. The school is very outward looking and works with a range of external advisers and local schools. It can be a little daunting to invite visitors to the school, but it helps leaders to confirm judgements and identify key areas for development.

Our approach to learning has had a clear impact on standards. In 2013 82% achieved level 4 in RWM (compared to 75% nationally) and 93% achieved 2 levels progress in all three subjects. Considering the backgrounds of many of our pupils, we are tremendously proud of their achievements.

Headteacher Kirsten lemming
Two years ago the future of Ferndale Primary school looked bleak. The results had been steadily dropping in Key Stage 1 and 2 until both were below the floor standard. Only 29% of children were on track by the time I joined. Pupil numbers were decreasing rapidly, parental engagement was waning and staff morale was at an all-time low. Since then Ferndale has been on a journey.

The first priority was to raise the quality of teaching. We focused all staff meetings on CPD, and many specifically on what constituted good teaching. Clear expectations were set but they were coupled with the scaffolding and support required to help evaluate and improve their own practice.

It was also important to raise standards and expectations. The culture needed to change so that staff, parents and pupils believed that regardless of background or family circumstance these children were capable of achieving anything. A good example of this was the fact that there had been no level 3’s in KS1 for some time. By the end of 2013 that picture had dramatically changed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rigorous monitoring of teaching and Pupil Performance Meetings helped to ensure that no child was left behind and that there was a clear focus on progress. New interventions were initiated and work scrutinies took place to close the many and varied gaps. A new system for teaching reading was introduced as well as regular writing moderations which meant that all staff would be systematically swapping books, and discussing the children and their levels openly and honestly.

Throughout this process we always brought it back to the children, with the focus being on how we could raise their achievement and ultimately their life chances.

We needed to rewrite the curriculum to ensure that not only were the children excited but the teachers were too. We wanted everyone to be inspired to teach and to learn. The questions we posed ourselves were: ‘What skills and values do our children need to be prepared for life in the 21st century and how can we find interesting and innovative ways to prepare them for this in the classroom?’ We also introduced a Forest Schools program and lots
of outdoor learning, creativity and life skills. Most of the behaviour issues faded rapidly and instead of building resentment they built memories instead.

Safeguarding and child protection were major issues for us, which needed to be dealt with swiftly and effectively but we always ensured this was backed up with support for not only the children but often the families as well. There is always a reason why children behave as they do. It is never enough to just respond to that behaviour; as much as is possible, you have to deal with the root cause through strong relationships and effective and on-going family support. We have seen a huge rise in parental engagement by building strong links with our community and by introducing an open-door policy. Safeguarding was recently graded as Outstanding.

Leadership and management originally had no capacity to improve so a new senior management team was crafted and new subject leaders were appointed to work alongside more experienced staff.

Approaching the new academic year in 2013 another shift was needed. A new determined energy was running through the school as we started thinking like a good school moving towards outstanding. Distributed leadership became more of a focus with assistant heads and middle managers taking on more of the monitoring as they began genuinely leading the curriculum. Staff meetings moved from a top down approach to more discussion based. We have a very talented staff who now work together to further improve our school. Ferndale is still on a journey and always will be. Although it is no longer one of plugging gaps and managing behaviour, it is now about achieving and maintaining excellence. The focus is always on what excites us and our pupils, and what we can do next that is different. In 2014 Ofsted graded the school, as good with outstanding Leadership and Management; these are exciting times and long may they continue.

Gary Evans, Headteacher, Ferndale Community Primary School

For more information please visit; www.ferndaleprimaryschool.co.uk
“Challenge” is not the word that first springs to mind when you visit Trottiscliffe CE Primary School, tucked away in a beautiful Kent village, nestling at the bottom of the North Downs. Our prospectus and website speak of the family ethos that pervades our school – a small school with a big heart. But “challenge” is what has ensured the survival and improvement of our school, culminating in a positive Ofsted inspection in June 2013, when we were deemed to be “Good” with outstanding features.

With dwindling numbers of pupils, the residents of Trottiscliffe village had fought hard to retain the school when it was made subject to Special Measures in January 2003, and in 2006 Kent County Council agreed to keep the school open. People still talk of the intensity of the support to keep alive the “heart of the village”. Subsequent Ofsted inspections rated the school as “satisfactory”, until the prospect of this actually being unsatisfactory loomed and the previous headteacher challenged the staff to focus on strengthening teaching and learning further. Local authority advisers gave support and ratification to these improvements.

So how was it done? Through the implementation of a “Challenge approach to learning”. This relies heavily on giving children opportunities to investigate and problem solve, hand in hand with the discrete teaching of knowledge and skills needed to find answers. Out went the more traditional approach of giving children solutions and in came the language of challenge. Children and teachers talked of being in the “learning pit”, and using a range of strategies to get out and find answers. We use phrases like “stuck is good” because “you are then at the point of new learning”. This approach received verification from the Ofsted inspector who told me it was evident that “children had learning resilience in bucket loads”!

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When I came to the school in January 2013, accepting the challenge of moving the school forward again without the sizeable leadership team that I had been used to as head of larger schools, it was evident that teaching and learning was good. The missing bit of the jigsaw was staff being able to access assessment data quickly and easily and “own” it for themselves. I devised a simple but comprehensive spreadsheet for each year group that records levels of attainment and progress in points scores, six times a year. Teachers have instant access to it and it is used to monitor progress very carefully, referred to in Pupil Progress meetings, and it informs Provision Mapping so that targeted children receive appropriate support and extension.

As a school with a small cohort each year, with sometimes very different profiles, we are proud of the 2013 levels of attainment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation Stage</th>
<th>Year 1 Phonics</th>
<th>Year 2 Phonics</th>
<th>KS1 Level 2b+</th>
<th>KS1 Level 3</th>
<th>KS2 Level 4+</th>
<th>KS2 Level 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62.5% at a Good level of development</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Reading 92%</td>
<td>Reading 50%</td>
<td>Reading 91%</td>
<td>Reading 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing 83%</td>
<td>Writing 50%</td>
<td>Writing 82%</td>
<td>Writing 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maths 92%</td>
<td>Maths 42%</td>
<td>Maths 82%</td>
<td>Maths 27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now we know we are a good and improving school, but the challenge is as strong as ever; we are on the journey to “outstanding”. The key issues are about teaching and learning: embedding consistently outstanding practice in marking and feedback to children to create and maintain a learning dialogue; timing the moment of teacher intervention perfectly so that children make maximum progress; and tying detailed planning tightly to this. However, the expertise is in the school already. Through the collaboration of the Pilgrims Way Partnership of schools, we are about to embark on action research projects for teachers with Canterbury Christ Church University, based on these key issues. Add to this a highly motivated Governing Body, a curriculum that is increasingly based on practical and enriching experiences, in and out of school, and the underpinning of our Anglican school ethos. The result is children having fun while they learn.

The last words should go to the children interviewed by the Ofsted inspector; when asked what they would change about the school, they replied “We can’t think of anything”!

For more information on Trottiscliffe CE Primary School please visit; www.trottiscliffe.kent.sch.uk
This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
Primary pupils in Surrey stood out nationally in their reading, writing and maths by rising above the national average Key Stage 2 results. Seven-year-olds across the county performed well in the exams, showing their development in the last four years.

Nationally, 72% of pupils achieved level four or above in reading, writing and mathematics, compared to 75% in 2012. In Surrey the average was 78%.

Children also excelled when it came to gaining a ‘good’ level four in reading and maths, as well as level four or above in the writing teacher assessment, exceeding the national average of 63% by 5%. Girls continued to perform slightly better than boys in the county, with 82% gaining a level four in reading, maths and writing, with the boys at 74%.

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School in Dorking was one of the top ranked schools in the county, with 100% reaching level four in all three categories, 93% of which were ‘good’ results.

Other schools that impressed include Holy Trinity, in Guildford, with 83% gaining level four and up, 75% being ‘good’, while St Thomas of Canterbury, also in Guildford, achieved 79% of ‘good’ results from 84%.

Burpham Foundation Primary School also excelled, with 90% of pupils gaining ‘good’ level four results and 93% achieving level four and above in all areas.

Headteacher Paul Goddard said: “We are absolutely delighted with these results, which are testament to the hard work of pupils and staff.

“We believe good foundations at primary level are important. We say ‘start here and go anywhere’ and that is an important idea to the school. We want to put these children in the best possible position moving forward. However, it is not just about tests and we make sure that the children will have a well-balanced outlook and opportunities in the future.”

A Guildford school that did not fare as well was Weyfield Primary, where results showed that only 22% of Year 6 pupils achieved level four or above, while 14% achieved a ‘good’ level four.

However, Weyfield’s governing body said it was not surprised by the results, considering the ‘extremely challenging’ educational start experienced by the 36 pupils who had taken the tests, before the arrival of headteacher Simon Wood in 2012. Under his headship, the school has been transformed, in the eyes of Ofsted inspectors, from ‘failing’ to ‘good’, with a subsequent change in the school’s reputation.

Mr Wood said that its current Year 6 was on track for a successful 2014.

“Learning at Weyfield is about every individual as the whole child,” he said. “Given the story of Weyfield and the challenges it has faced, it was always going to take two years to redress the balance. Pupils who left Weyfield last year had been fully reintegrated into school life which, after such cumulative regression and inequitable provision, was, quite simply, the right thing – the only thing – to do.”
Children join our school from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures. We support all children to achieve more than they thought possible through a creative curriculum which fosters confidence in reading, writing and mathematics. Through the hard work of a committed team of staff, Sythwood has now become a school of choice for parents. The school is respected in Surrey and shares its expertise in helping all children become the best they can be with schools across the county.

In our Nursery and Reception classes, children develop their communication and social skills through a range of play-based activities both indoors and outdoors. We place great emphasis on the foundation stage and have resourced it with high quality equipment, furniture and staff!

In 2009 our Children’s Centre was built. Families with children under 5 years access many services, classes and support from its staff. This is an integral part of our work and the manager is part of the SLT. Ofsted commented;

“The highly effective partnership between the school and the children’s centre forges good links with parents and carers and strongly promotes pupils’ well-being.”

The proportions of children with English as an additional language has grown to 50%, and 56% are from a non White British background. All staff are trained in knowledge of language structures and to support and plan for vocabulary acquisition. The learning environment is language rich, informative and attractive so that children are engaged and motivated to learn. Children learn English quickly and often make accelerated progress.

Our nurture group offers a short term intervention which addresses barriers to learning arising from social/ emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The school also has a Specialist Centre for 12 visually impaired children who are fully integrated into classes and take part in all activities with support when needed.

Ofsted commented;

“It is a genuinely inclusive school where all pupils have the opportunity to succeed. Visually impaired pupils are exceptionally well integrated into school life.”
Five years ago we introduced the International Primary Curriculum. Teachers use cross-curricular topics to make sure that children are interested, enjoy learning, and provide lots of opportunities to practise and improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Popular topics are Chocolate, Rainforests, Volcanoes and Earthquakes, Dinosaurs, Myths and Legends and World War II. Visits (including to our own copse) and visitors linked to topics extend children’s experiences. Children from different backgrounds are encouraged to respect and celebrate each other’s cultures and beliefs. We have strong links with a Ugandan school and have exchanged visits with them.

We are working towards the Rights Respecting Schools award based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and our Value of the Month and Language of the Month form a basis for assemblies and PSHE.

Attainment and progress have improved and through careful monitoring we have identified individuals and groups of children to receive extra support or interventions. As a result the gap between pupil premium and other children has virtually closed. Teaching has focused on raising the level of challenge for more-able pupils both in class and through extra events such as the ‘Challenge Saturdays’ held throughout the year. We also offer a rich diversity of clubs.

Professional development is given high priority and as a result many of our teachers are outstanding.

Two years ago we introduced an effective behaviour management system which is used consistently throughout the school and Kagan cooperative strategies have increased participation in lessons. Inspectors commented on “how very skilfully adults manage pupils’ behaviour and as a result pupils learn to behave well in lessons and around school.” Annual surveys of governors, staff, parents and children inform our strategic intents for the year. In a recent survey the children expressed pride in their school and all staff said they would recommend the school as a good place to work.

Sue Tresilian Headteacher Sythwood Primary school and Children’s Centre, Woking, Surrey
Catsfield CEP School

An Outstanding School

Catsfield CE School is a smaller than average Primary school with four mixed aged classes. Although overall the number of SA+ and Statemented children is below average, the majority of these are concentrated in upper KS2. The school has close links with the church and local community.

January 2011, I became headteacher of a ‘Good’ school full of happy children, with a friendly ethos and the lowest KS1 and 2 results in the county. Ofsted 2012: ‘...soon after June 2009, the standards dropped dramatically’. The more demanding Ofsted criteria gave a judgement of Satisfactory in February 2012. Standards in teaching, behaviour and engagement were inconsistent. Attainment was poor. My immediate aim was to address standards whilst keeping the ethos of our school. My duty was to create the right climate for learning. The first priority was to create a shared vision owned by every stakeholder. ‘Achieve Excellence – Inspire Dreams’ incorporates the determination to secure excellent outcomes for every pupil regardless of their starting point or background. We needed to restore growth and pride in our school, to dramatically improve achievement and to change the culture into one of high aspirations and of learning.

In October 2013 we received an Ofsted judgement of Outstanding in every area: ‘In the last two years progress, including pupils with special educational needs has accelerated rapidly and the achievement gap is closing’. Our 2013 81% boy heavy year 6 cohort had 50% Statemented or School Action Plus children. Pupil Premium was used effectively to improve behaviour. Interventions were clearly targeted for maximum impact and evidenced. A significant number of children accelerated progress between the end of KS1 and KS2 resulting in a valued added score of 103 for lower attainers. The HMI told us she ‘could not tell which children had special needs. The children’s learning is full of joy.’

We now have children who are happy and buzzing at the beginning and end of the day, enthused teachers and children and excellent quality first teaching, a vibrant curriculum, where success is celebrated, a culture of learning, challenging targets where Every Child Matters. Lessons provide high learning and high engagement creating a flow of well being where children beg to carry on. Assessment for learning, and a personalised skill based curriculum leads to children who are emotionally engaged, cognitively stretched, collaborative, persistent and reflective learners. We cater for children’s many different learning styles; ‘Learning outside the classroom’, music, dance, after school clubs and a commitment to the local community plays underpins our curriculum.

Leadership is distributed, highly visible and very approachable. SMSC is built into every lesson.

Success is choice not chance. Change is often difficult and we did receive opposition. We realised that in changing culture staff and children need to be treated equally, valued and listened to. We engaged consultants to work with all staff on priorities for our school development plan. This raised self-esteem and gave everyone the tools to improve without devaluing them as a person. This bespoke, cost effective CPD led into performance management. Some people rose to the challenge; others chose to move on. Ofsted 2013: ‘Teaching is [now] of a consistently high quality, stretches pupils and fires their imaginations. It is highly effective in developing literacy and numeracy.’ We work very closely with the Church. Parents play an important role though our ‘Community and Parental Engagement’ programme and our proactive PTA Governors are very involved and are well aware of how the school is performing, its strengths and areas for development.

A reward system has had a significant positive impact on Behaviour and Attitudes to Learning. All success, both within and outside school is celebrated. The children, through their behaviour, work towards a substantial whole school reward. Last year they earned enough points to provide a sound system, roving microphones and spot lights – a significant achievement.

Our whole team is united, committed and driven to give every child the best opportunity to succeed in life. We do this through working together within a Christian ethos for our local and global community, to achieve success in a safe, stimulating, fun and creative environment.
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Deamonn Hewett-Dale, Headteacher

‘The outstanding relationships between staff and pupils and exceptionally good pastoral support strongly influence pupils’ good behaviour and positive attitude to learning and significantly underpin pupils’ good achievement’.

The opening paragraph of our recent OFSTED report sums up Flying Bull.

When people ask about our success, it is difficult to identify one key reason. It is a recipe of different ingredients that work extremely well together to create the school we have now.

Obviously, good and better teaching is a major part of our success. Teachers work hard to ensure they are delivering the best lessons they can and our very experienced in the parts that go up to make a successful lesson. The Leadership Team recognise the importance of continuous CPD for all staff, but especially that of the teachers, to support them in the role they carry out.

The tracking of data is a vital part of the leadership team’s work. It is not just about looking at current standards and saying this is the current situation, it is about the ‘so what?’ Regular Pupil Progress Meetings involving the SLT, class teachers and teaching assistants take place to ensure we are meeting the needs of ALL of our children. This information feeds in to our self evaluation which in turn generates a whole school improvement plan which incorporates action plans for each year group, highlighting clearly their areas for development and the detailed plans to address these. Our self-evaluation system and our school improvement plan are based around the four main OFSTED headings, therefore making it easier to grade ourselves against the current schedule.

OFSTED reported,

‘Leaders, managers and governors use monitoring information effectively to bring about improvement, resulting in pupils’ rising levels of attainment. This, together with their strong commitment to provide the very best education for all pupils, means that the school is well placed to improve further’.

OFSTED praised the use of Pupil Premium funding across the school. Here, we have highlighted the areas of need and used targeted resources to tackle underachievement. This has included an extra teacher for two year groups which had the highest level of underachievement, an appointment of a Pupil Support Worker for Attendance, training for key teaching assistants in the FFT and BRP reading programmes and continuation of having an ECAR teacher on the staff.
Having a third teacher in a 2 form year group has had a positive impact on closing the achievement gap. In the morning sessions, the year groups are split into three ability groups to create smaller groups. In the afternoon, the teachers run key targeted interventions in reading, writing and maths.

The pastoral side of our work in Flying Bull also has a great impact on children’s learning and well-being. There is a strong Learning and Pastoral Team made up of three Learning Mentors, one Home-Family Link Worker, and admin support for the team. Their role is to support both children and their families in breaking down barriers to learning. These barriers may be either in or out of school.

Due to budget constraints, the support from external agencies such as Social Care and CAMHS has reduced and we find ourselves having to deal with issues we would not have considered dealing with in the past. This pastoral team works closely with the Resourced Provision for BESD children that we have at Flying Bull. This serves the whole of Portsmouth and we have 12 places for children between the ages of 4 and 9 who are at risk of permanent exclusion or have been permanently excluded from their own school.

2014 is a very exciting time for Flying Bull Primary and Nursery as we move towards conversion to academy status with the University of Chichester Academy Trust. Also, our £3 million refurbishment comes to an end in May 2014. We have the team in place and as we continue to influence children’s positive attitudes towards learning, following our core values of achievement, appreciation, caring, honesty, humour, respect and tolerance we can help our children achieve their full potential.

For more information on the Flying Bull Primary and Nursery School please visit:

www.fbps.co.uk

Flying Bull Lane,
Portsmouth,
Hampshire,
PO2 7BJ

023 9269 4313
How has Harrietsham Church of England Primary School managed to be successful over the past nine years? We believe the most important reason is that three out of six teachers have been the same for ten years and the other three have been with us since September 2007. Consistency, determination, diligence, care and common sense teaching have been the core of our success. The well-being of staff is paramount. Happy staff are loyal and dedicated and this in turn leads to a happy, secure learning environment where happy children learn!

Ten years ago when our headteacher, Mrs. Julie Silk, first came to the school (fourth HT in five terms) it was in special measures. Understandably, the behaviour of the children had deteriorated by the time she arrived. This was the first area to be tackled as learning was not going to take place in that kind of environment. With a very good teaching staff and excellent Chair of Governors (Governor of the Year in 2009) the school began to make rapid progress and this was confirmed when the school had its Ofsted inspection two months prior to moving into its brand new building. It was graded ‘Good’. We had also, in a short space of time, gone from having 111 students to 129. We now have 156.

Staff were able to focus on positive behaviour. Celebration Assemblies give us the opportunity to recognise effort, positive attitudes to learning and empathy. Visitors comment on the wonderful ethos of the school and its super, vibrant displays. Our values inter-mingle with our Smart-Kid characters which focus on the competencies of learning, recognising that children are all good at something and that it is important for them to identify their own strengths and weaknesses. Our students are given responsibilities and pupil voice is taken seriously with School Action Squad students even discussing aspects of the School Improvement Plan with our governors.
Although there have been many initiatives, we have had the strength and self-belief not to adopt them but to continue on our path to raise progress and achievement. These initiatives are always discussed and we take on board any aspects that we may think will work for us in school. We strongly believe that children learn in different ways and we allow them to do this.

At Harrietsham we are very determined to deliver a curriculum to the children which works for all; it is largely cross-curricular but subjects are taught discretely when this is not appropriate. The experienced teaching staff have been given the freedom to plan, resource and teach their classes in the manner which works for them. As long as lessons have clear objectives, appropriate differentiation and evaluation and assessment opportunities, teachers are not expected to produce copious plans and over-detailed schemes of work.

Four of our six teaching staff are moderators and three of them have supported the LA with the moderation of other schools in Year R, KS1 and KS2. For the last five years, two Ofsted inspections, LA advisors and Mrs. Silk have not seen any lesson which has been less than ‘Good’. We have some very experienced and long-standing LSAs too who are able to take intervention groups very successfully, but we also use good quality teachers to boost groups from those with SEN to those with higher abilities.

Our Ofsted inspection in November once again confirmed that we are a ‘Good’ school; it is a very positive report. Despite heavy workloads that all small school staff have, we continue to have excellent, dedicated teachers and governors who work so hard for our pupils and remain determined to make our school ‘outstanding’.

One important directive from Mrs. Silk has been that the basics in maths must be understood fully before the children move on. We recognise that the maths curriculum moves swiftly with little time to reinforce concepts and consolidate. To this end, this is the third year in which multiplication tables, number bonds and basic number concepts are the main focus of maths lessons and less time is given to the other areas of maths until these basics are fully understood and applied. We have seen a definite improvement.
Holtspur School

Holtspur lies on the outskirts of Beaconsfield, Bucks. A small and exceptionally happy school with a very mixed catchment, we are unique in being the only one-form entry combined school to have an Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP), catering for ten children with speech, language and communication needs. Our diversity, and our commitment to inclusion, makes our school a very special place, an integral part of our local community. Our accelerating progress has been based on a holistic approach to improving all aspects of learning in the school.

On my arrival in 2007 the school had a large deficit budget and the highest exclusion rate in the county. Numbers were dropping, and the school desperately needed updating. Improving the school environment for learning was high on the agenda. The school was open plan and this was contributing to our behavioural issues. We created individual classrooms and brought in a strict behavioural code. Renovations to other areas followed and the children found a new pride in their school. We are now renowned as a very caring school with no exclusions. “Pupils attitudes and behaviour are outstanding which helps to create an exceptional happy environment” Ofsted 2012.

Staffing is stable and CPD is of high importance to all staff. Our Teaching Assistants have weekly meetings and receive full training in interventions to support children at all levels. Our meticulous tracking of data, as identified by Ofsted, means that no child can fall through the gap and every pupil who needs intervention to help reach their full potential is picked up quickly and given individualised support. Our interventions are systemically monitored for effectiveness and progress.

Early maths interventions have been particularly successful enabling all children to gain 2 or more levels progress at KS2 with APS being considerably higher than national. Strong support for our AGT pupils noted by Ofsted as very effective has enabled a high number of level 6 maths. Two levels of progress in both English and maths have risen from 87% in 2010 to 100% in 2013 and our Value-added from 99 in 2010 to 101.5 in 2013.

By structuring learning in the ARP round a multi-sensory curriculum, we have improved the two-levels progress in writing from 35% to 100%, with 66% making more than two levels progress in 2013. Our ARP staff’s expertise has been called ‘phenomenal’ by one school improvement partner.

Outdoor learning is a key part of school life. With the enthusiastic support of parents, we have created a sensory garden, planted an orchard and built what one expert considers ‘the best school pond in the UK’. We have a thriving gardening club which was selected in 2012 and 2013 to grow plants for the Chelsea Flower Show, where we won Silver and Silver Gilt. We were the first school in our area to gain Green Flag award; we work with a local farmer and with Waitrose, who have allowed us to sell our plants and jams in their store.

Bronwen Zeun, Headteacher of Holtspur School

For more information visit; www.holtspur.bucks.sch.uk
Or contact 01494 674325
Giving children and their families a pride in their school has an impact on their desire to learn. We celebrate and promote the school’s activities and achievements, appearing regularly in the local newspapers. Our choir is well known within the local area, as is our samba band. Both perform at many prestigious events in the community.

Introducing a strong music curriculum was another priority. Specialists deliver weekly lessons from Year 1 onwards, and all children learn an instrument. We believe they should be given opportunities to perform, so we hold monthly performance assemblies to which parents are invited. Extra-curricular learning is strongly encouraged. We expect children to belong to at least one club and currently offer over 27 clubs, most of which are run by school staff.

As Head of this now thriving school, I believe that being a strong and positive presence is paramount to building confidence in both pupils and parents. I know every child and the level they are working at; I know the classes well and I am on the playground every morning to chat with parents, knowing most of them by first name.

“The schools leadership and management have inspired parents, pupils and staff by setting high expectations” Ofsted 2012.

Bronwen Zeun, Headteacher of Holtspur School

For more information visit;

www.holtspur.bucks.sch.uk

Or contact 01494 674325
St Paul’s is a small one form infant school. The majority of children are from white British backgrounds and the proportion of children with special educational needs is broadly average.

As a controlled Church of England school we have close links with our village church and Christian values underpin our inclusive ethos with a focus on respect for all.

The adults working in our school are key to our success. Turnover is very low and at our recent Ofsted inspection (October 2013) the inspector said that he wondered whether he would find staff set in their ways. Instead he found a team who, from the cook and caretaker to the teachers and leadership team, all understand the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation, share values and vision and are all motivated to try new things and to do their part in working towards improvements.

All teachers are both knowledgeable about data and fully accountable. We target and track progress carefully. A number of evidence based interventions – some teacher led and some teaching assistant led - are used to support children who are not reaching the expected levels or making the required progress. We are really proud of the progress that children make in Reading and Maths. Progress in writing is also good and we are working really hard to ensure that progress in writing is as great as it is in reading and maths, by implementing new ideas and ensuring that all teachers are utilising those agreed in the past. We are very proud that so many of our children attain the required standard in phonics and think much of this success is due to the redesigned phonics and grammar teaching which was developed a few years ago after we had analysed writing and spelling and realised that not all elements of Letters and Sounds were working for our children.

Working in partnership with parents so that learning is extended at home is vital. As well as providing high quality infant school education, St Paul’s is also a Sure Start Children’s Centre providing integrated services for parents of children under 5. As well as meaning that many more children are “school ready” we are certain that this work has really improved our partnership with parents.
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On site daycare and extended services support parents with both pre-school and school age children and parents are able to attend adult and family learning in maths, literacy and ICT as well as seek support for returning to work and vital parenting support which compliments our own behaviour management in school.

At St Paul’s we believe that children must have good food and drink so that they can learn and behave well. Recently we joined with our onsite partner daycare and employed our own cook. We now offer freshly prepared high quality meals and snacks throughout the day – we are even able to offer these at a cost lower than via the county contract.

Over the last two years changes have been made to our curriculum so that it is much more relevant to our community and everything is underpinned by our 4 key values. Visits and visitors are a key part of our curriculum to give children the quality life experiences and vocabulary that many of them lack. ICT also supports our work both as a teaching tool but also as a way of extending learning.

Real partnership working with other local schools in the immediate area means that progress and attainment data is shared. Across our area, maths attainment declines as children get older and so we have implemented initiatives through our school and we hope that our colleagues in key stages 2,3 and 4 will over time reap the rewards of these.

This partnership working also means that we are able to implement joint policies. Three years ago we all agreed an attendance policy for the area making it clear to families that they should not book family holidays during term time this has bought about improved school attendance across the local area and for St Paul’s an improvement of around 5%.

At St Paul’s we look forward to meeting the new challenges ahead of us.

For more information on St Paul’s CE Infant School please visit:

www.stpaulstonham.com

Or contact

01252 400222
Westcourt Primary & Nursery School

“The team have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and make it clear that there is no place for mediocrity and half measures.”

OFSTED Mar 2013

Westcourt Primary & Nursery School is a smaller than average primary school on the outskirts of Gravesend, which caters for children from 3-11 years of age. Our school is in a high deprivation area. Most of our children enter our Nursery and or Reception with skills significantly below national averages. The majority of our children are White British with those from Traveller backgrounds, White Eastern European, Indian and Black Africans creating the next largest groups; in total Westcourt currently has twenty different ethnicities. All of our children fall into at least one vulnerable group; 62% Pupil Premium, 30% English as an Additional Language (EAL) and 16% Additional Educational Needs and Disabilities (AEND) and 1% Children in Care and a small minority not in any group becoming a vulnerable group of their own.

There were many aspects that needed to be reviewed and changed with the main priority being on teaching and learning. My first message was that there would be change, not for the sake of it, but for the sake of our children.

The very first task was to change the mind-set of all of the staff by working with them and encouraging them to think of our children and provision in a different way: empowering them to believe that there wasn’t any reason why our children could not learn and achieve – regardless of their backgrounds - if the right environment was created. It was also important to begin to create and inspire a team spirit amongst them to enable them to role model positive behaviours to our children. This has resulted in increasingly confident learners who have self-belief and respect for each other and the adults in school.

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Before being appointed Headteacher in September 2011, the school was in a Soft Federation and had had a bad reputation locally for many years; since coming out of Special Measures in 1999, Westcourt had been consistently awarded ‘Satisfactory’ by Ofsted - until March 2013. On taking up my position, 36% of our children across the school were at age appropriate learning, this figure having now increased to 62% as at 2013.

July 13 Yr 6 Average Point Score Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>KS1</th>
<th>KS2</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>KS1</th>
<th>KS2</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>KS1</th>
<th>KS2</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>24.85</td>
<td>12.84</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>24.77</td>
<td>13.48</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>13.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>24.15</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>10.72</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The staffing structure was overloaded with Teaching Assistants which had shown very little impact upon our children’s learning and development. Teachers had received conflicting direction and this had impacted upon staff morale and creativity in a negative way. There was a need to restructure all teaching, admin and support staff for the sustainability, affordability and purpose of the school. This led to the creation of a Senior Leadership team, middle leaders and a redress in the balance of Teachers to Teaching Assistants.

By monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning environment and provision, positive improvements were made following observations in both of these areas. Assessment for Learning and moderation is now embedded into school practice as is good Wave 1 teaching. As a result, we now have vibrant learning environments and 85% of our teaching has been assessed as ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted, a vast improvement from 100% of our teaching ‘Requiring Improvement’.

Improving Communication, Literacy, Language and social skills were key priorities in the Early Years. To help build these skills, we set out to develop the outside learning area and appoint a Teaching Assistant with a sole responsibility for developing Speech, Language and Communication in Early Years Foundation and KS1. These actions have positively impacted on the percentage of children achieving age related expectations as they move into KS1.

The last strategic change in the first 18 months was to address an ineffective Governing Body. We all chose to resign in the best interests of the schools’ future allowing the creation of a new Governing Body which is now functioning in a way that effectively supports and challenges myself as Headteacher and the progress of the school.

The school has come an incredible way forward over the last two and a half years. We have achieved a “Good” OFSTED, but we know that our work isn’t finished as we now strive to raise our children’s attainment to achieve in line with national averages and our staff are eager to seize the opportunities that the new curriculum will give us.

For more information on Westcourt Primary & Nursery School please visit:

www.westcourt.kent.sch.uk

Silver Road
Gravesend
Kent, DA12 4JG
Tel: 01474 566411
West Hove Infant School

West Hove is a larger than average Infant School with 700 pupils across two sites. The large majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds although the school is serving an increasing diverse community and most classes now have around 7 different languages spoken. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to pupil premium is lower than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action plus is higher than the national average. The school has a very good reputation within the local community and is oversubscribed being able to fill each place three times over.

The Ofsted Inspection in 2008 graded the original school as ‘outstanding’. Due to the demand for places we extended our provision onto a second site making the school an eight form of entry. Our most recent inspection in 2013 graded the schools again as ‘outstanding’ in all areas. We are never complacent and always strive to improve in any aspect of teaching and learning to ensure that our pupils achieve exceptionally well.

Ofsted graded over 50% of lessons observed as ‘outstanding’. One of our biggest initiatives over the past few years has been to develop a learning model which is based upon Accelerated Learning in Primary Schools and Assessment for Learning. Each lesson follows this learning model which has ‘brain breaks’ embedded within it. Alongside this, we have developed our own coaching and mentoring programme to ensure consistency across all 24 classes. In addition, our curriculum is based upon first hand experiences and is planned to develop the skills of the auditory, kinaesthetic and visual learners.

Ofsted wrote:

“Excellence in the quality of teaching at the school underpins pupils’ outstanding achievement. The school has refined a system for learning that maximises progress. Each lesson is split into different parts punctuated by ‘brain breaks’ where pupils move about or think about something else. This enables them to stay well focussed and keen to learn more……. Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning because lessons are such fun. They explore the curriculum on a ‘magic carpet of learning’.”

For more information please visit; www.thelifecloud.net/schools/WestHoveInfants/
School Inspection Performance

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We have a highly experienced governing body which holds the school to account for pupils’ achievements. It is keen to learn about all systems and structures, through a balance of challenge and support. They undertake regular visits to the school and are well trained on using data effectively.

The expansion of the school has involved a staff re-structuring process and huge recruitment of staff at all levels. During this change process, it was crucial that the senior leadership team remained committed to pupils achieving their highest potential and that leaders at every level shared the vision of the continued success of the school.

For English and Maths, we introduced personalised targets for all children. These are related to the learning intentions for each lesson making them purposeful and meaningful to the pupils. Following the introduction of the pupil premium we have revised our programme of interventions to ensure that this has maximum impact. The interventions are closely monitored and tailored to meet the needs of the children.

We have introduced a more rigorous system for tracking the performance of individual pupils which is directly related to teachers’ pay. Termly pupil progress meetings hold staff to account for the performance and achievements of the pupils they teach. Teachers have developed their ownership of data and now use this exceptionally well to inform planning. These systems have ensured that pupil attainment has stayed outstanding in KS1 and is consistently significantly above local and national averages. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress in reception and continue to make exceptional progress through KS1.

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For more information please visit:

www.thelifecloud.net/schools/WestHoveInfants/
St Bernadette Catholic Primary School has been at the heart of Catholic education in London Colney for over 40 years. It is very different to the school I inherited in 2011 – a school that certainly seemed to have lost its way. As Headteacher, I am extremely proud and privileged to belong to a community working together in partnership to meet the challenges and opportunities of our mission statement to:

‘Learn to grow in knowledge, faith and love through friendship with Jesus and Mary.’

Securing good and outstanding teaching was a decisive factor in improving pupil progress. A high turnover of staff at any one time is never ideal; at the start of this academic year (2013) we had six new teachers, five of whom were NQT’s! Our first recruitment criterion did not include ‘a first-class Honours degree’; we wanted like-minded colleagues who saw the great potential in all pupils, who were able to motivate, engage and inspire by their own passion and zeal to be a lifelong learner. In this respect, we consider ourselves to be a forerunner to ‘teaching schools’ without the prestigious title or remuneration.

As many schools will testify, success and lasting improvement are only possible through a genuine commitment to do one’s best and to strive for excellence at all costs. It is not a journey for the faint hearted; neither can it be undertaken alone – a fact that was astutely acknowledged by our Ofsted inspectors: “The headteacher, key leaders, staff and governors have worked well together in bringing about necessary improvements.”

We are very fortunate and thankful to be supported by the Diocese of Westminster and our local authority, Hertfordshire in our mission.
Parents too, stand shoulder to shoulder with us on our journey. Together, we share a vision for each child to be cherished and have fun in these formative years, while offering them the best opportunities for an excellent education.

From our humble starting point, our latest KS2 results testify that we are significantly above national figures in all areas, particularly at Level 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KS2 results 2013</th>
<th>Level 4+</th>
<th>Level 5+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English grammar, punctuation and spelling</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transforming our school, as stated previously, could not be achieved by any one individual, irrespective of their passion, potential and capacity; success relies on teamwork and I was therefore delighted to have the skills and expertise of my senior management team and my governing body every step of the way. The governors’ foresight and commitment demonstrated exactly what was required from each and every one of us within the school community – a crucial factor that did not go amiss with Ofsted: “Members of the governing body are enthusiastic and have a clear overview of the school’s performance. In particular, they recognise the school’s rapid journey of improvement under the headteacher’s leadership. There is a good understanding of pupils’ attainment and progress.”

Our 2013 Ofsted report is a celebration of what we can achieve when our entire community works together. We will ensure that we build upon our success to become an outstanding school. Likewise we will not stand still nor become complacent. I am convinced that it is our team approach that makes us the successful school we have become; proud to be at St Bernadette Catholic Primary school and proud of what we achieve.

We now offer an inclusive curriculum, delivered by a caring, highly skilled, and professional staff with 100% of teaching currently being good or better and 60% of which is outstanding. Collectively, our focus is on monitoring the standards of teaching, moderating learning outcomes, establishing pupil progress targets and building challenge for all. We have now become a school offering excellence and enjoyment, not only in terms of academia, but also in sporting achievements. For example we have won three sporting awards in this year including Primary School of the Year Award.
BARNHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

BARNHAM PUPILS SHINE

James Everett- Headteacher

As you walk towards the entrance of our school you can’t fail to notice this image;

This statement is certainly true in recent years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011 to 2013</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level 4+</td>
<td>+25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level 5+</td>
<td>+26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Level 4+</td>
<td>+22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Level 5+</td>
<td>+14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths Level 4+</td>
<td>+9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths Level 5+</td>
<td>+19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Points Score (APS)</td>
<td>+2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the story behind these improvements?

Barnham is a larger-than-average primary school of 310 children and is based near Chichester in West Sussex. There is a Special Support Centre for children with physical disabilities and the school has undergone many significant staff changes and premises redevelopments over the past 10 years.

It is important to note that any recent increases of performance have been built upon the solid foundations of a well-run and well organised school. With the appointment in September 2012 of a new Headteacher, the school has been able to refine, refocus and plan for the school’s continued improvement, gathering behind a clear vision which is driven by the desire to improve, challenge and achieve excellence for all.

One of the key features of our development has been an increased rigour and attention to detail. There is nothing significantly new in what we are doing; it is just that we are doing it with more intensity and energy. Staff roles and responsibilities have been made clearer and activities which distract us from our goals have been stripped away. The system for staff development hinges upon development of the personal and professional self. Staff are valued and celebrated for their achievements, and are trusted to make decisions and behave autonomously. Sharing of good practice, reading and research, reflection and peer observations are becoming common practices. New developments have to have a proven track record e.g. Dialogue and Feedback (Sutton Trust)

For more information on Barnham Primary School please visit;

www.barnham.w-sussex.sch.uk
There has been a real drive to develop the quality of learning experiences for our pupils as well as the quality of teaching. We have high expectations and aim for all teaching staff to be as close to outstanding as they can be, but there is an understanding that teachers need to follow their own path towards this goal. We do not employ a set menu approach, we only ask that teaching staff build upon their strengths, analyse areas for development through regular review and reflection and constantly strive for the best that they can be. We accept and celebrate the fact that there will be a diversity of difference and welcome debate and discussion. We also recognise that outstanding teaching should correlate directly with progress and impact of learning over time.

Our approach towards strengthening and increasing pupil progress and attainment has become sharply focused and creative. We employ a scientific and analytical approach to new developments, which is cohort specific and implement plans and actions that relate to key groups or individual children. Plans are not generic and each term we look at new and exciting approaches. These have included Active8 (early morning exercise/ breakfast club), Endeavour Days (problem solving activities on/off site), Only Girls Allowed Maths Group and Enterprise Week. The whole school has immersed itself in the language of progress by climbing aboard our Progress Train! The use of APS to show termly progress is shared and celebrated with the children both in lessons and through Assemblies. Each child knows what our aims are and the part they must play in working towards them. This collective sense of purpose has been one of the most powerful developments put in place.

The pupils at Barnham have become our greatest advocates and supporters. Our values of inspiration, care, inclusion and creativity remain at the heart of our ethos but are underpinned by an academic rigour and vibrancy. We are asking the children to think deeper, work harder and reflect more effectively upon their learning. We have therefore ensured that we provide for them a greater voice in the management of the school, which in turn has led to a greater sense of identity.

We are passionate about what we do but do not take ourselves too seriously. We know that there is still so much to be done and we find this tremendously exciting. All aboard!

For more information on Barnham Primary School please visit;

www.barnham.w-sussex.sch.uk
The Federation of St. Elphege’s Catholic Schools comprises of St. Elphege’s Infant and St. Elphege’s Junior Schools.

The school is in Sutton LA and situated on the border of Sutton and Croydon, it is a VA school in the Southwark Diocese. The school has a very diverse intake with a high proportion of pupils on Pupil Premium, 70% of the school population is from Ethnic Minority backgrounds, including pupils from Irish Traveller heritage, and 40% have English as an Additional Language. There are over 70 home languages spoken, meaning that many children require a high level of support to develop higher order language skills however, through high exposure, children become fluent in social communication very quickly.

The Federation was formed to develop the junior school which at the time was experiencing difficulties. By using the expertise and systems in the infant school, the junior school developed its teaching and learning to meet the needs of all pupils. The federation began a journey which, although at times was very difficult, has proven most successful for pupils, staff and parents. The strength of school to school support has been proven in the success of our junior school which moved from needing LA Additional Support and Intervention to being judged as Good in January 2010. The junior school is now working toward outstanding and pupil progress and attainment is excellent.

**KS2 SATs Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>L4+</th>
<th>L5+</th>
<th>L6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Infant school has maintained its Outstanding Ofsted grade over many years. It is a school that embraces change and adapts its curriculum to meet the diverse needs of the pupils and families. The latest Ofsted in May 2013 graded the school Outstanding once again.

“The teaching is very carefully planned to cater for the needs of all pupils and time is well used to make sure all pupils are fully engaged in their learning. Work is well designed to allow for all pupils to fully engage in their work, and high expectations make sure they have the opportunity to extend their learning further.”

Infant Ofsted, May 2013.

In September 2013 the school was designated as a National Support School and I became a National Leader of Education. The school is delighted to be recognised as one where staff can support other schools. St. Elphege’s has a history of outreach work in supporting teaching and learning in local and out of borough schools. The Infant school was a designated...
“Beacon School” and over many years has welcomed in a large number of teachers to observe teaching and good practice. Both schools have staff whose expertise is valued outside the school community; one teacher is an Associate Maths Advisor, another an English consultant who has designed early writing and phonic IT programmes such as “Letter Layers” which are used in many UK and USA schools. Other members of staff deliver training in universities for trainee teachers.

The school has actively engaged in school led and school based teacher training and, over the past ten years, has trained over 20 teachers on the Graduate Teacher Programme, Registered Teacher Programme. The school is currently working with School Direct trainee teachers. All these trainees have secured good or outstanding grades in their training year. Teacher Training has had a very positive impact on outcomes for the teachers who coach and mentor students. Staff skills, knowledge and professional development have enabled them to be successful in securing more senior positions in the school and have aided the success of the schools’ federation.

The federation has well-established “Assessment for Learning” procedures. Class teachers’ weekly planning allows for AfL in every lesson. This ensures pupils of all abilities make good or better progress and that pupils meet the learning objective and engage in the success criteria of the lesson. Tracking and assessment procedures across the school ensure challenging targets for all pupils and evaluate the progress of all groups. The school has a focus on “Closing the Gap” for those on Pupil Premium and intervention groups are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The school has engaged in action research with the DfE to explore successful interventions in “Closing the Gap”.

As a Catholic school we aim to live out the Gospel values in all we do. Our strap line is “With God all things are possible”, Matthew; 19:26. In light of this, we aim to make the school a welcoming and caring community where all are respected and valued. We welcome 20% of children from other faiths and celebrate our religious similarities whilst respecting each others’ difference. The children in the school are well behaved and sensitive to the needs of others. As a school we celebrate the many cultures and traditions of our families.

The Pastoral Deputy Head Teacher supports pupils with SEN and vulnerable pupils and families. We ensure that families are able to access help and support where and when needed. The school recognises how advantaged we are
living in the UK and because of this aims to support children who do not enjoy our standard of living. In this respect we have developed links with “St. Francis and All Angels School and Nursery” in Ghana. The pupils keep in mail contact with the Ghanaian pupils through letters and photographs. School fund raising over the past five years has enabled “St. Francis and All Angels School and Nursery” to buy land and extend their school. A member of staff has visited the school and developed very strong links that go beyond fundraising. Pupils also support the Christmas Shoebox Appeal and in 2012 we sent over 100 shoeboxes overseas.

We establish links with schools in many countries and during “The Catholic Year of Peace” we linked with a school in Uganda and another in Syria. It is through these links our pupils develop their understanding of the world and also develop empathy with those less fortunate than ourselves. Our aim is to extend pupils’ understanding of and contribution to the national and global community; that all in the school community recognise their rights and responsibilities in relation to the “common good” and understand and appreciate the religious beliefs, many cultures, and traditions of those who belong to our school community.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities abound and are very powerfully delivered.

“The school’s introduction of the ‘Come and See’ religious education programme both consolidates tenets of the Catholic faith and the beliefs of other religions. Different cultures and beliefs are also accessed through visits from parents and religious groups. Links are established with Africa and Europe to generate global understanding and harmony.”

Infant Ofsted, May 2013.

To stimulate learning we have developed a creative curriculum that encourages pupils to engage in their learning and develop resilience as learners. A wide range of experiences are planned for pupils to enrich their vocabulary, develop speaking and listening skills and improve the quality of their writing. Teachers plan opportunities for embedding RE, Literacy, maths, science and ICT skills in the Creative Curriculum and children are given investigations so they can identify the skills needed to complete tasks.

The school aims to enrich the pupils’ experiences and knowledge of the world and opportunities for outside learning, visits and creative approaches to learning are planned across the academic year. The year 5 class have a week in Osmington Bay where they use a range of IT programmes to explore science and take part in physical and team building challenges. In year 6 pupils have the opportunity to spend a week in the Isle of Wight where there is a strong history and physical focus, some Y6 pupils prefer not to go away but spend the week on a range of exciting activities centred in London and Surrey.

The school recognises the need to develop the skills and talents of all pupils and to encourage a culture of participation. Consequently, there are many sporting and musical opportunities available in the curriculum as well as after
School Inspection Performance

The Federation of St. Elphege’s Catholic School is a thriving community that is well supported by our Parish Priest, governors and parents. The pupils are confident, caring and happy and take part in a range of learning experiences that develop personal and group talents. The staff are hard working and committed to the continued success of the school and strive at all times for excellence in all areas.

“The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding, because of the way in which all aspects of each pupil’s development are tracked and monitored. Staff knowledge of pupils and attention to their individual needs is evident in every class in the school.”

Junior Ofsted January 2011

Frances Hawkes
Headteacher

The Federation of St. Elphege’s Catholic Schools

For more information please visit;

www.stelphege.org.uk
School Inspection Performance

West Midlands

This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
‘STRUGGLING’ BIRMINGHAM SCHOOLS IMPROVING AFTER CONVERTING TO ACADEMIES

Government figures revealed that 645 under-performing primaries across the country have been converted to academies under new sponsors since the start of 2012.

The Department for Education has claimed 41 ‘struggling’ Birmingham primary schools are making progress after converting to academies in the last two years.

Government figures revealed that 645 under-performing primaries across the country have been converted to academies under new sponsors since the start of 2012.

Sponsored academies are those removed from council control and backed by organisations such as education trusts, private companies, religious groups or even other, more successful schools. And the Department claims that sponsored academies have improved by an average of three percentage points in school league tables compared to one per cent across the board.

A Department for Education spokesman said: “The best way to turn around the stubborn under-performance that exists in some schools is to bring in a sponsor. These sponsors bring with them experience, strong leadership, know-how – and a track record of success. “It is vital we continue to raise standards so all children leave primary school with a thorough grounding in reading, writing and maths so they can thrive at secondary school.”

The 645 stuggling schools now under sponsors includes, as well as 41 in Birmingham, six in Walsall, one each in Dudley and Solihull, two in Sandwell, three in Wolverhampton, ten in Warwickshire, three in Worcestershire and ten in Staffordshire.

The academy scheme has recently come under fire from teaching unions and critics who claim that schools are operating outside of public oversight and regulation.

Controversies include the Al-Madinah free school in Derby, which is being taken over after being accused of financial mismanagement and inadequate teaching and the appointment and swift resignation of Analiese Briggs, a 27-year-old with no teaching qualifications, as head of Pimlico Primary in London.

There have also been concerns that academies and free schools are not required to employ qualified teaching staff, nor are required to sell healthy food only to children - as other schools are.

In November the Government announced a new system of regional regulation to answer criticism that academies and free schools were given too much free reign and lacking oversight.

Although no longer overseeing academies, Birmingham City Council has recently helped set up an education partnership between schools and the council to work together on improving education standards.
Arden is a larger than average primary school in inner-city Birmingham. The large majority of pupils belong to the Muslim faith and are from a range of cultures, but are predominantly of Pakistani heritage. The majority of families are at least dual language.

Our pupils all enter nursery or reception considerably below national expectations, with no children in relevant age bands, with particular needs for oracy, communication and social skills.

In July 2013 we were inspected and achieved OUTSTANDING in all areas, and this has been the culmination of years of work by an outstanding and dedicated team of people. Previously our 2008 inspection judged us good in all areas. There is so much that could be written as to why and how we achieved this improvement, but to try and explain briefly I will use the four Ofsted headings (as July wasn’t that long ago and they are imprinted on my brain!).

**BEHAVIOUR and SAFETY**

The key to the happy and positive ethos of the school is borne up in our Mission Statement which we all discuss every year:

“Arden is a safe and creative environment: a happy, vibrant and forward thinking community where each child and adult is valued and able to learn, play and achieve.”

We believe if this is achieved then all the tools are in place for success.

“Behaviour around the school and in the playground is excellent” (Ofsted 2013).

This is because the school is based on respect, on children who love to learn because teachers make each day different, interesting and challenging and because all staff follow one clear set of systems, based on positivity and children understanding themselves and each other (we follow the PATHS programme, which has had a significant impact).

The learning takes place everywhere, even during breaks, lunchtime and in extra curricular activities (75% of eligible children attend from martial arts to gardening to Glee club!). Every activity, lesson or topic should present a new challenge: the experiential aspect of education is as important here as mastering the core skills.

We have a small team (we now call our Every Body Matters team) who meet weekly to talk about any children or families causing any concern for any reason, then signposting or delegating to the appropriate action. There are no barriers here for every child to succeed, only hurdles – and we help people jump them.

**QUALITY OF TEACHING**

“Teachers have high expectations of pupils of all abilities….Lessons inspire the pupils to think differently….teachers plan lessons that build rapidly on what pupils already know….teachers and teaching assistants quickly intervene when a pupil does not fully understand”. (Ofsted 2013)

These points highlight how quality teaching is the key driver for raising standards and achievement. Recruiting a strong, flexible team, identifying where they will best work and supporting them through quality in – house training will ensure that...
The key areas from previous Ofsteds were to do with extending opportunities for literacy and oracy, as well as improvements in marking and challenge. There have been a raft of initiatives trialled to support these. Some have been dropped along the way, but those that worked have been embedded and shared with all staff for a consistent approach. Briefly these have been: constant use of enforcing phonic skills right through the school; ensuring all children answer in full sentences and that every sentence is the improved; finding opportunities for literacy across all subjects, especially writing; all support staff involved in short, sharp interventions that they plan and support Performance Management, a clear, one page marking policy based on quality feedback and response….all these were devised via Leadership and allocated to the SDP and to every staff members appraisal.

**LEADERSHIP and MANAGEMENT**

At the end of a two year rebuild to increase intake, the school was restructured so that each phase is now micro-managed by an Assistant Head who looks at all aspects of teaching and learning, including assessment and data. They meet weekly together to share ideas and to moderate findings, looking at consistency and progression. The Head and Deputies then quality assure and look at any overall patterns or areas for development.

All levels of leaders are encouraged to work together to deliver INSET, support other schools and increasingly work on the wide range of programmes developing in the Greet Teaching School Alliance, which is in integral part of school improvement in the inner city.

Empowering staff to constantly review their own practice and the outcomes of their class ensures quality self evaluation and a willingness for constructive monitoring. All areas for improvement are linked to appraisal, school development and CPD so that key focus areas are being worked on by everybody consistently and over a sustained period.

By having a curriculum which is centred on arts and creativity alongside the core subjects ensures staff and pupils remain enthused, excited and aware that being a good learner comes from being a good person.

**ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILS**

“All pupils make rapid progress” (Ofsted 2013). From very low starting points we achieve at least national average results. Our progress measures are high, with many children achieving 3 or 4 levels progress across Key Stage 2. This can only happen because at Arden we have ensured children want to come to school, love to learn and know how to learn and the staff know the child in a holistic way and aim high, allowing them to jump over any hurdles in their way. Staff are trusted to devise quality lessons together and to evaluate them, so that next steps happen quickly and necessary gaps are covered immediately.

I believe you can sense Outstanding just by being there – there is a purposeful feel, there is talk everywhere about learning, there are hundreds of different activities going on to stimulate

Tony Lacey, Headteacher of Arden Primary School
PRINCETHORPE
JUNIOR SCHOOL

School Improvement at Princethorpe Junior School by Georgina Arnold, Head Teacher

Princethorpe Junior School in Birmingham is a two form entry school. An above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. A below-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.

When I became Head Teacher in September 2001 my vision was to create a successful, caring school in which everyone could achieve to the best of their ability.

In June 2013 Ofsted commented that:

• The headteacher understands the needs of the local community and has established a school environment which parents, children and staff welcome and value.
• Leaders and managers have worked relentlessly to ensure that the school consolidates and improves on its present quality so that all aspects are good.
• School leaders are not afraid to make changes if they do not feel their work is having the desired effect.
• Pupils achieve well, and an above-average proportion of pupils reach the nationally expected standard in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

How did we achieve this? This is a brief summary of some of the things that contributed to our ongoing success.

Standards of Teaching and Learning

I have never believed in ‘jumping on band wagons’ and have always looked at new initiatives and taken on board only the elements that fit in with my beliefs about education and what will benefit our children. I have always believed that it is important not to overwhelm staff and children with change. Money is spent wisely so it has a positive impact on standards of teaching and learning. Teachers are always given the necessary training and quality time to implement new ideas. Teaching assistants are highly valued and well trained. The quality of planning and marking is consistently good. The leadership team have robust monitoring procedures which focus on improving achievement and challenge the teachers and teaching assistants to be reflective practitioners.

Achievement and Attainment

• Progress and achievement in maths has been improved by setting for maths across the school.
The library has been relocated to the entrance of the school so that it is the focal point of the school and can be used throughout the day.

Termly monitoring of children’s progress in reading, writing and maths.

Termly meetings between the Head Teacher, SENCO and class teacher to identify children who are not making required progress.

Teachers plan and implement interventions to help these children make better progress. The success of each intervention is measured.

Ongoing teacher assessment means that teachers and other adults in the classroom respond well to pupils’ individual needs. They are skilled in knowing when to support and when to leave pupils to be more independent in their learning.

**Inclusion**

There are very few behaviour issues because the Behaviour Policy is consistently implemented. Pastoral Care is a high priority and our Pastoral Care Manager is always available to talk to parents and children. Staff work hard to make parents feel welcome in school and to create a safe and motivating environment in classrooms for the children. Relationships are warm and friendly so that children develop the confidence to learn. Regular opportunities are provided for children to work in pairs and in groups to help develop their confidence and self-esteem and promote their social development. Our SENCO has gained the national qualification and one teaching assistant has trained as our Lead Practitioner for ASD. A teaching assistant is allocated to every class to support gifted and talented as well as children with SEND. We provide a wide range of after school clubs where children can develop their talents and improve their self esteem in fun ways. We hold weekly celebration assemblies and a Graduation ceremony for year 6 to celebrate children’s achievements. As a result children now show caring attitudes towards each other and are respectful and considerate. They are proud of their school.

**Triple A Report System (Ofsted recognised the success and impact of this approach)**

- Introduction of ‘Triple A Report’ system focusing on individual children’s attainment, achievement and attitude.
- Children and parent friendly reports which are colour coded so that it easy to see where children are doing well and where they need to improve.
- Termly meetings between individual children and their class teacher to discuss their report, the targets they have been set, what they need to do to achieve them and the support they will be given.
- Focussed discussions at Parents’ Evenings based on these reports with over 95% of parents attending these meetings.

We are now striving to become an outstanding school.
Luston Primary School

GROWING, LEARNING AND ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Luston Primary is a small rural school situated in north Herefordshire. There are 91 pupils on roll who are taught in four classes. Only 23% of the pupils live in the catchment area, with the majority of the pupils travelling from the nearby town of Leominster, a distance of two miles. A fluctuating number of traveller children attend the school, peaking at 12% last year. Our number of Free School Meals pupils is above the national average and school pupil mobility is high. The School Deprivation Index and number of School Action Plus pupils are significantly above the national average. Only 63% of our current school roll reflects home-grown pupils. Attendance figures are in the lowest quintile.

The last Ofsted inspection was in January 2010 under the leadership of the previous Head Teacher. One key issue identified was to ensure that all pupils in Y3 – 6 made good progress in mathematics and that pupils’ individual targets were relevant. Progress now from KS1 - KS2 is good with an average point score of 14.3 and attainment levels at Key Stage 2 reflect 100% Level 4+, with level 5+ 57%. All pupils are aware of their next step in learning against the learning objective, due to effective feedback and marking.

So how has our performance been improved and sustained?

I am very fortunate to lead a dedicated team of staff. Every pupil is known by every adult and an extended family atmosphere is created; we are proud of our reputation as an open, friendly and welcoming environment with a continued concern for all children regardless of ability or background. We all contribute to projects, sharing thoughts, implementing ideas and monitoring and assessing change. We believe in the development of the whole child teaching them to be confident and enthusiastic learners, with the skills of how to learn independently and in co-operation with others. Great emphasis is placed on teaching children the importance of value; all our children show great respect for one another.

We acknowledge that learning occurs not just within the classroom environment but outside of it in many forms. We are fortunate that our school building is surrounded by spacious grounds that include playing fields, an orchard, a pond and wildlife area, class gardens, dedicated fun and adventure play areas and our own large Forest School.

A member of staff leads Forest School sessions across the school and is supported by a dedicated team of volunteers and parents. Forest School sessions are enthusiastically welcomed by all pupils. Pupils engage with each other collaboratively on a variety of tasks that they have planned based upon their curiosity in the world around them. These weekly outdoor sessions develop confidence as independent learners and contribute to a greater understanding in a whole range of other skills which are transferable to their learning and progress within the classroom.

Music is a very important part of school life. The school has achieved a national Gold Sing Up Award and singing is highly valued. Songs often reinforce the learning of concepts and lyrics are often analysed to discuss school values. Key Stage Two pupils participate in weekly ensemble class instrument lessons which promote enjoyment and a sense of fulfilment that taking part in musical activities can bring to an individual.

We are a healthy school and promote healthy lifestyles. We encourage all pupils to be active and to fully participate in school and after school activities. Despite being a small school, teams are always formed to take part in local competitions and success is measured as working as a member of a team.

The need to improve the low rate of attendance has been fully supported by all stakeholders, who understand the importance of regular attendance. A weekly inter-class attendance competition is held. Parents receive half termly annotated attendance data and know that absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Our attendance to date has improved by 3.5% since summer 2012. Adhering to and communicating with stakeholders is critical for continued progress in attendance to be maintained.

We are a happy and vibrant school who enjoy new challenges. We firmly believe in pushing the boundaries of learning both inside and outside the classroom for all of our pupils.

Mary Freeman
Head Teacher
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Mary Freeman
Head Teacher
At Bromley Hills, our aim is to inspire our learners so that they can leave us as confident, independent, caring members of society, fully equipped to face the world. We achieve this by creating a positive ethos where everyone feels valued, safe and ready to learn.

Bromley Hills is now a thriving school with almost 300 pupils. We are located in Kingswinford, near Dudley, and we are a one and a half form entry primary school with a Governor led nursery on site. The school takes pupils from a range of socio economic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils eligible for FSM is 17%.

Children coming into our parent and toddler group and then our nursery, join a vibrant and inspiring setting, where they build upon their existing knowledge and skills to lay the foundations for their learning. Our nursery and reception classes work closely together and children learn through a mixture of child initiated, adult led learning and free flow activities that challenge and extend their learning.

As children continue their journey through Key Stage 1 and 2, they develop their knowledge and understanding through a growing love of learning. Exciting programmes challenge and inspire them to achieve. Our ‘Creative Curriculum’ has Literacy at the heart of children’s learning alongside maths, science and PSHCE. This approach, coupled with whole class instrument tuition, specialist PE provision and outstanding MFL delivery, ensures children are provided with a broad, balanced and innovative curriculum.

The journey to achieve our current success has taken four years. Prior to my arrival, the school had seen six headteachers in five years, and this had culminated in low standards, poor teaching and a lack of consistent leadership. The school had been managed, not led. There was a sense of low self esteem amongst the whole school community and we were on the verge of being judged inadequate. Changes needed to be made immediately.

My first job was to appoint a deputy, fresh to the school, who could share my vision and work with me to move the school forward. Once this relationship was created, we set to work!
The number one priority was to improve the experience in the classroom for all children. We worked closely with staff to develop their teaching in order to raise standards and ensure consistency of assessment across school. It was evident that there were pockets of good practice in school and we needed to nurture and develop these. We moved away from the traditional style of a ‘School Improvement Plan’ and introduced ‘Raising Attainment Plans’ which were reviewed on a termly basis. The impact of these were much more immediate as there was a sharper focus on the areas for improvement.

Clear performance management objectives, linked to data outcomes, targeted areas identified in the RAP in order to secure rapid and sustained improvement. The deputy and I introduced half termly pupil progress meetings to ensure that progress was evaluated, interventions implemented where necessary and that teachers understood their accountability for that progress.

Regular drop-ins from the Senior Leadership Team ensured visibility and an improved monitoring programme was implemented. This ensured that, for the first time in a very long time, there was distributed leadership with each member of the SLT taking a leading role in not only managing, but leading their phase.

The result of this was that progress and attainment dramatically improved and in September 2012, OfSTED judged the school to be good. They stated that pupils achieved well, teaching was good, with some that was outstanding, pupils had very positive attitudes to learning and:

“Good leadership and management from the school’s senior leaders contributed to significant improvements since the last inspection. Staff morale is much higher and previous underachievement has been eliminated as teaching has improved.”

It is a privilege for me to be headteacher here at Bromley Hills, and I am proud of the hard work and dedication the children, staff and governors continue to give in order to strive for excellence. This is not the end of our journey, it is only the beginning.

Jon Stevens
Headteacher

For more information please visit; www.bromhills.dudley.sch.uk
Saint Thomas More is a larger than average primary school with 430 children from nursery to year 6. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are both higher than average. There are twenty seven languages spoken in school. School Action Plus and SEN is above average. The vibrant school ethos is supported by Parish links strengthened with weekly visits from our Parish Priest. Children attend Mass at the church every week when our Altar Servers minister. We have a strong sense of purpose and our mission statement: ‘Learn and Grow as God’s Holy People’ places God at the centre of everything that we do and say.

The Ofsted Inspection of 2009 noted inconsistency in teaching and in the quality of feedback marking. Following the inspection, a new feedback marking policy was introduced and CPD sessions were offered to all staff, including our Learning Assistants. It took time, but our feedback marking slowly strengthened and became fully integrated into our teaching and learning.

In 2011 we had an Ofsted/HMI ‘Single Subject Maths Inspection’ where it was noted:

“The quality of marking of pupils’ work is good, and is consistent across teachers”.

Assessment for Learning strategies are now strong in our school, with marking being a key element of the cycle. Clear learning intentions matched to the pupils’ needs; success criteria; effective questioning; target setting; careful analysis of data; high quality interventions (such as Numbers Count) and high expectations set within a positive climate for learning, have been key to the improvements in attainment and achievement.

Our most recent Ofsted in 2012 noted:

“Teachers make sure pupils are very clear about what level they are working at, and pupils use their targets well to improve their learning and progress. Marking in literacy books is thorough and teachers skilfully identify the next step in their learning for pupils and then give them time to respond. Consequently, pupils’ achievement in writing is improving.”
We worked hard on unpicking what ‘good’ looks like in a lesson; setting up lesson study and mentoring to support teachers in improving their practice. We built up a very positive climate in school so that teachers felt that they could ask for support and we adopted more of an ‘open door policy’ where staff could drop in to see good practice. We used the expertise that we already had in our school to drive the standards in teaching and learning. We had an emphasis always on the learning, preferring to see a ‘guide on side’ in lessons, rather than a ‘sage on stage!’ ‘Every child progressing all of the time’ was another phrase constantly used and one that had a great effect on driving standards and improving teaching.

Our end of key stage data is improving year on year in reading, writing and maths:

KS2 attainment 2013 level 4:

Reading: 98.3%   Writing: 95%   Maths: 98.3%

KS2 attainment 2013 level 5:

Reading: 51.7%   Writing: 41.2%   Maths: 50%

A big drive on the teaching of maths to the more able resulted in 15% of children achieving a level 6 in 2013.

We put huge importance on in-year progress. In 2013 all year groups made more than expected progress in reading, writing and maths. Pupil progress meetings, moderation meetings, giving staff ownership of their data and having high expectations have all supported this.

We are not just about standards in the basics. We have developed a broad, exciting and relevant curriculum for the children. We believe in ‘making the memories’ and plan for enrichment days throughout the year. We have residential visits in year 4, 5 and 6 that support our outdoor learning. We have outstanding PE provision, delivered by our PE coach; a specialist language teacher for upper key stage 2 and a broad range of before and after school clubs. The recent Pupil Premium funding has enabled us to offer enriching experiences by, for example, performing ‘Joseph’ in a City theatre.

We are blessed with wonderful children, supportive families, caring staff and a governing body who has a good understanding of the school. It is exciting to see our school grow towards ‘outstanding’.
St Mark’s is a much larger than average primary school with 380 pupils, many of whom have English as an additional language with over twenty languages spoken in school. The school has a high mobility due to pupils arriving throughout each term who are new to English; therefore our PSHCE curriculum and induction process is crucial in ensuring pupils are ready to learn. The table below shows the mobility of pupils and the percentage of pupils who are new to English for the academic year 2012/13. Ofsted acknowledged that the school faces challenging circumstances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>Percentage mobility</th>
<th>% Pupils new to English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>21.07%</td>
<td>12.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>15.62%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>53.65%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>11.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>20.75%</td>
<td>16.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>39.21%</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>9.25%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.28%</td>
<td>11.87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the context of our school, language development is a barrier. To address this we developed an assessment profile for all children in the early stages of English acquisition. This enables teachers to track their progress effectively and implement strategies appropriate to the stage of their English development. All staff accessed training from ‘Stoke Speaks Out’ which

Our journey for improvement began in March 2011 when the school was eventually removed from Special Measures. At this time the school could only be judged as Satisfactory due to the levels of attainment in English and Mathematics and the following key issue was identified;

“Further develop the school’s curriculum so that it consistently provides imaginative and effective opportunities for learning and applies key skills in literacy and numeracy to reflect the cultural diversity of the school and the wider community”.

In June 2013 the school was inspected and was judged to be Good across all aspects with outstanding features due to the following improvements being implemented.

Within the context of our school, language development is a barrier. To address this we developed an assessment profile for all children in the early stages of English acquisition. This enables teachers to track their progress effectively and implement strategies appropriate to the stage of their English development. All staff accessed training from ‘Stoke Speaks Out’ which
helped everyone in school to have a shared understanding of the links between communication and attachment. Our latest Ofsted report states that, “The pupils who speak English as an additional language are very well supported and often make good and some make outstanding progress”.

In December 2011, we received training and support from Focus Education and developed a curriculum which was fit for purpose. The Learning Challenge Curriculum was developed with our children’s interests and experiences at the heart. All children either go on a visit or have a visitor in school to support their learning and widen their knowledge of the world every half term. Parents pay half of the cost of any visit with the remaining being paid through Pupil Premium funding. Ofsted reported that, “The curriculum enables pupils to progress well with their basic skills and provides creative and stimulating activities. This enables pupils to enjoy their time at the school and to achieve well. There is a range of after-school activities that are very popular”.

We have developed a rigorous system for analysing pupil data and identifying children at risk of under-achievement. These children are then discussed in detail at a half termly Pupil Progress Meeting where the teachers meet with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and the SENCo. Clear lines of accountability for pupil progress have been established and have impacted positively on attainment and progress outcomes for all pupils. Ofsted recognised that, “From their starting points, pupils make good progress and some make outstanding progress during their time at St Mark’s”.

Since September 2010 new staff have been appointed to the Leadership Team. We have worked hard to ensure all staff are developed and their strengths recognised. Ofsted identified that, “The leaders and managers at all levels share a common vision for striving for the very best for all the pupils across the school”.

The key to our success has not only been a drive to raise educational standards but also a focus on nurturing our pupils so that they can access learning and achieve. We have recently re-visited our school values with all stakeholders. These values centre around RESPECT and are integral to daily life at St Mark’s. Ofsted recognised, “The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of pupils’ learning are outstanding in a fully inclusive environment”. We are immensely proud of this quote.
St Giles’ and St George’s School is a thriving learning community that Ofsted recognised as outstanding in leadership and behaviour and safety. This was not always the case. Eight Years ago our crumbling Victorian building in the town centre was replaced by a purpose built school in a beautiful green space half a mile away. At this time, teaching and learning were not conducive to raising standards whilst the outdoor environment was very poor. Since moving to the new school, staff, governors and parents have propelled the school towards its current success and are now driving it towards being an outstanding school. We believe that our children deserve nothing less.

The school serves a socially and ethnically diverse community with above average numbers of children in receipt of free school meals. The school’s caring ethos based on Christian principles help all children to thrive whatever their circumstances.

The journey from the old school to the new has taken eight years of serious improvement. A focus on teaching and learning as well as developing an outside dimension to the environment was central to this.

After moving to the new building, consistency was difficult to maintain when undergoing inevitable changes. Staff turnover was high and leadership had barely sufficient capacity to influence the whole school. Developing newly qualified teachers was crucial at this time and the hard work was rewarded as colleagues are now excellent practitioners and potential leaders for the future.

In 2012 leaders were identified and integrated into key stages, EYFS, Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2. This significant change was planned to create teams in the four corners of school and particularly in Year 3 and Year 4 where underperformance was endemic.

The school’s bravery in moving leadership colleagues into the different age groups for longer term strategic gain was noted by Ofsted. Any move of this kind was not advantageous to all classes at the time and one cohort missed out on the exceptional teaching that they needed. This decision was not made lightly and despite a dip in standards for one year group, achievement and teaching within our school have now risen to a significantly higher standard.

The school has also undergone a dramatic change in terms of learning environment both indoors and out, which are now rich and versatile. Woodland areas, a pond, a gravel garden, artists’ sculptures and many other features are a normal part of the children’s day. The school has gained gold medals for its grounds and the children’s allotments in Britain in Bloom. Bug hotels, bird boxes and an outside classroom add real value to the curriculum and to the enjoyment of the school community.

The school has an excellent reputation in sports and music, illustrating the rich extra-curricular activities and excellence achieved by the children. The Singing Squad performs locally and is in great demand in the community. All colleagues are committed to provide additional activities such as cookery, board games, enterprise and cheer leading.

Governors, parents and staff fully support the school by challenging it to be the best that it can be. However, as well as raising standards, the most important elements of our school improvement are our children’s high self-esteem, independence, confidence and excellent attitudes to learning.

Lynne Evans
Headteacher
School Inspection Performance

School Inspection Performance

Through learning, playing, sharing and believing, we succeed together.

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Following the changes, leaders were able to maintain consistency in their teams and develop practice as planned. Leadership meetings that focused on scrutiny of practice, evaluation, tracking of groups and nurturing on an individual level were crucial. In this way we are achieving our ambition that all children and colleagues will fulfil their potential.

"The pursuit of excellence by all leaders and managers at the school, including governors, is demonstrated by their uncompromising and highly successful drive to continue to improve the school."

First hand experiences and visits are now fully embedded in learning. Projects are based on humanities, science, the arts and high quality texts. Enquiry based learning and questioning are threaded throughout the projects to ensure that they are child centred. All subjects are integrated or taught discretely, improving standards and progress year on year as well as preparing children for high school. Home based study with parents is included to enrich projects and to involve parents in their children’s learning.

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Lynne Evans Headteacher
DOVECOTES PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

Dovecotes is an average sized primary school where the proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is more than double the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average and pupils with special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus and those with statements is above average. In the last two years the demographics of the school community has changed considerably with a greater number of pupils entering the school at the very earliest stages of learning English and the stability of the school population has decreased considerably.

It’s crucial that we react quickly to the new demands that these issues bring with a strong focus on raising achievement for all the pupils that come through our doors no matter what complex issues they present to us. We completely re addressed the timetable introducing a third lesson before lunch each day that was 40 minutes long where all staff (Teachers and teaching assistants) could address basic skills for pupils and give them further practice to either sort out misconceptions that they may have had in their mathematics, reading or writing lessons or address specific learning skills that we had unpicked that meant their learning was stalling.

It was important that we asked the children what they wanted to do to make learning easier for them. At pupil voices meeting with myself over squash and biscuits the children clearly stated they felt they needed more practice of some learning they were being asked to achieve. The children suggested that they may need to miss parts of some lessons to have this opportunity to improve so long as that when they returned to the lesson they would not feel lost and not part of what the rest of the class was doing and that they don’t miss the same lesson each week. So this is what we are doing. The curriculum is adapted to meet their needs. Our pupil premium funding is helping us give these opportunities to our pupils by making sure we have enough staff to deliver the intervention.

Key groups are selected from the data if they are not making the necessary progress against national expectations. After selection of each group it is then analysed to see which child has not made enough progress. Meetings are held with myself and the teacher to unpick the issues in their learning for mathematics, reading or writing. These Raising Attainment Plans (RAPs) feed into the individual intervention plans that are shared with all staff so they can teach that group in the intervention sessions. The whole process is reassessed each half term and the process repeats itself.

CPD for staff is key to raising the achievement of our pupils. Every member of staff has a coaching partner or mentor depending on their experience in their job role and we film each other termly. Clips are shared with staff at meetings to share good ideas and practice. The leadership team also team teach with staff, planning and delivering different parts of lessons to share their skills and introduce new elements such as the “daily 10” where 10 minutes of every maths lesson is spent on basic skills such as tables or giving “killer” questions to challenge pupils to think for themselves.

There is an ethos of high expectation but a climate where we “are all learning together” and learning can be enjoyed by everyone at Dovecotes and long may it continue.

Gill Beddow, Headteacher of Dovecotes Primary School
School Inspection Performance

DOVECOTES PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Inspection Performance

Government Initiatives IQ

Intervention takes place all through the day after their core lessons have been delivered in mathematics, reading and writing. Intervention groups are run for individuals, or small groups of pupils for 20-30 minute sessions and are led by teachers or teaching assistants who are very clear what the outcome of that intervention should be so children catch up quickly with others. They have the opportunity to become independent learners through clear prompts, reminders and resources to help them as they are working so they can achieve, become independent and take a pride in their work. The children state that these things make their learning easier and more enjoyable.

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Gill Beddow, Headteacher of Dovecotes Primary School
Great Bridge Primary School

All valued, all achieving, all equal.

Our school is set between the two small towns of Tipton and Great Bridge in the West Midlands - an area of widespread deprivation with small pockets of moderate affluence.

Great Bridge Primary is a large school: 475 pupils including an 8 place focus provision unit for children with significant and complex learning and physical difficulties. The majority of the school population is white although across school, 19 different languages are represented. The proportion of Special Needs is high, currently 29.9%. Baselines on entry show only 7% of children are at the expected standards of the developmental matters framework. Many children are at least 12 months behind and over a third are 18 months behind; for nursery children, this is half of their life.

In May 2012 Ofsted graded our school good with several outstanding features. The most important aspect of this was acknowledgement of the extended journey our children had to make in order to achieve national expectations.

When I became Headteacher of Great Bridge Primary in 2006, I took over a deficit budget and a very mixed staff, from those that were outstanding to others with serious weaknesses.

Children’s behaviour was challenging, exclusions were common, Governors were misinformed and parents were disengaged.

7 years later and the picture is very different. The Governing Body is challenging and well informed with a tight focus on school improvement, a secure knowledge of how school is run, our standards of achievement and the curriculum that is taught.

Staff changes have been facilitated, resulting in a team who are thoroughly dedicated, highly professional and relentless in their pursuit of improving the life chances of Great Bridge children. The leadership team is outstanding. They are highly skilled and cascade their experience to newer staff through a coaching model of personalised professional development. This move away from “one size fits all” CPD has enabled each member of staff to receive a training package tailored to their individual professional needs, leading in turn to a swift rise in the standards of teaching and consistency of approach across the school.

An overhaul of school finances focusing on exacting best value from every service provider led to a rapid move out of deficit. The Business Manager’s constant challenges to all aspects of procurement have saved us thousands of pounds. This relentless search for every extra penny has enabled us to build a new suite of rooms including two classrooms, a physiotherapy / sensory room, and four group teaching rooms.
A whole school approach to accelerating progress from extremely low entry points has centred on using the Pupil Premium Grant to provide smaller teaching groups with highly qualified staff. The extra teaching spaces created in ‘Little Bridge’ enable us to teach all KS2 year groups in 3 classes rather than 2. In September 2013, we extended this to Y2 and already, the impact is breath-taking with some Y2 SEN children moving from P6 to P8 or 1c in one term.

The afternoon focus is on the creative curriculum, linking knowledge and skills to foundation subjects, coupled with short, small group targeted teaching from the third teacher in each year to address the most recent misunderstandings in literacy or numeracy. This constant program of targeted “catch-up” is preventing the widening of a performance gap within cohorts plus the short, highly focused sessions grow confidence in core areas.

Across the country, setting children learning targets is commonplace and historically was a feature of our developing practice. However, over the last year, we have moved to 1:1 mentoring. Children discuss their strengths with a teacher and crucially they identify the skills they have mastered and their next learning steps rather than having these achievements and new targets pointed out by the teacher. Children have ownership of their learning.

And the parents….170 attended our KS1 Harvest Assembly this year! Parents’ Evening attendance: 95.5%

Where next? With radical changes to the primary curriculum and the bar raised ever higher, the journey our children will have to make becomes even longer. However the Great Bridge team look forward to these challenges with optimism and courage, in the secure knowledge that we are a good school, making the life chances of Great Bridge children significantly better.

For more information please visit: www.greatbridgeprimary.ik.org
Gnosall St Lawrence Primary School is a one-form entry school serving what appears to be a prosperous ‘commuter village’ just outside Stafford. In fact, the catchment is much more varied, with pockets of social deprivation in some areas of the village. The school is housed in an old Secondary Modern school, with lots of space but huge heating and maintenance costs which detract severely from the resources we can put into our children’s’ learning. However the Education Funding Agency is building us a new school due for completion by May 2015.

The school has travelled a hard road over the last two years to get to where it is now. In our 2011 Ofsted inspection – a month after the new Headteacher was appointed – we only just escaped Special Measures! A new SLT - new Headteacher and two Assistant Heads promoted from within the staff - immediately set about raising staff morale, which was very low. Strong leadership, recognising the creativity and talents of the existing teaching and non-teaching staff, reduction of bureaucracy and unproductive paper exercises, rigorous but highly supportive and constructive performance management, targeted and effective INSET of staff and very willing and eager Governors, tight pupil and group tracking and data management all contributed to the whole staff re-discovering the joy of working with and educating children. Marking is now consistently good, with pupils being given time to respond to and assimilate teacher comments. All teachers and teaching assistants take ownership of assessment data – it matters to them – which means they are completely in control of where the children in their class are with their learning. Everyone takes ownership for every child in the school – it isn’t just down to one teacher or the SENCO – it has become everyone’s responsibility.

This has permeated through to parents, whose voice throughout this journey has been valued through various channels including termly parent forums. We recognise the value in working in partnership with parents. Professionally, we have reached out to the locally-influential cluster group of Stafford Headteachers (SHEADS) and to teaching Universities, benefitting from the expertise and good practice that these institutions are able to bring.

The key to success has been to do what seems most obvious – put the children at the centre of everything we do. This means that whatever measures are needed and no matter how much extra burden it causes, staff always rise to the challenge. Like all good educators, their purpose has been simply to do their best for the children, to give them tools to succeed in life and to become aspirational in all of their learning.
Curriculum initiatives have been wholeheartedly embraced - prime examples are the Read, Write, Inc (RWI) scheme introduced in September 2012 and a new emphasis on outdoor education – “Welly Wednesday!” and “Alfresco Friday!” with us winning local eco awards. Admittedly some staff were wary of these initiatives until they saw the results, but now all staff embrace them fully. RWI in particular has been incredibly successful in raising literacy standards throughout infants, with 97% of the Year 1s passing the phonics screening test in June 2013. The 2013 end of Key Stage 2 results were the best they have ever been in the history of the school.

We have also expanded our range of clubs, whether before, after school or lunchtimes, such that 87% of our children attend one or more of our school clubs. Many of these are targeted at certain groups – for example, to address girls’ poor achievement in Maths. When asked what is the best thing about school invariably pupils quote the clubs – and after all the morning clubs we have breakfast together. Indeed, enrichment activities play a really important part in our curriculum; whole days and, once a term, a week is devoted to enrichment focus activities. We place a strong emphasis on involvement in our local community and embrace an understanding of different faiths.

All of this has resulted in the happy, successful school that is St Lawrence’s. We achieved a “good” grading from Ofsted in October 2013 – part of the report says: “There is a highly successful team approach to raising achievement and aspirations which involves all staff and governors. The whole school community embraces change and is ambitious for the children.” It was good to see that the report acknowledged the hard work that Governors have contributed to the journey of this school; they now understand their role much better and carry it out in a critical, challenging but supportive way – just as it should be!

The last two years have been a difficult but rewarding journey. Whilst the next few years will be no less challenging we are now well placed to achieve what we see as every child’s right – access to an outstanding education.

Trish Edwards
Headteacher
Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Infant School is a larger than average Primary School with 290 pupils. We have very close links with our Parish Church ‘Our Lady of the Angels’ and our Parish Priest is a regular visitor. We attend Mass and liturgies regularly throughout the year to celebrate special events in the life of the Church.

Our aim at Our Lady’s has always been to inspire and motivate all children within a caring environment. It is hugely important to us that each child is recognised and celebrated for their individuality. Our recent Ofsted Report’s opening sentence read….

‘Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Infant School is a place where every child matters. As a result, pupils feel safe and enjoy all aspects of school life’.

Since my appointment in 2005, we have been inspected three times. The first time was within a few weeks of me starting, which whilst alarming at the time, it gave us a great basis from which to begin the next stage of school improvement.

Since then, we have been full steam ahead in changing and reinvigorating many aspects of our school. In 2007 we introduced a more cross curricular approach to teaching in order to inspire and motivate all our learners. We are always keen to make sure that our topic choices engage our boys. Topics have a ‘Super Start’, a ‘Marvellous Middle’ and a ‘Fabulous Finish.’ Our curriculum was recognised as being exemplary in our latest inspection and we are very proud of this. We are now looking ahead to ‘The New Curriculum’ for September 2014 by identifying and implementing the necessary changes. As a staff, we are meeting regularly and we recently identified the curriculum drivers which we feel are most important to us.

• Special in God’s Eyes
• Learning to Learn
• Happy and Healthy
• Being Creative

We have been inspired by our engagement with ‘Building Learning Power’, which enables children to recognise the skills of learning. For example, puppets are in each class to remind the children to manage their distractions, or work cooperatively. Children themselves are beginning to use the language and recognise when they are using their powers. Our main aim is to make our children excited about learning and recognise how they can become independent learners.
In 2010, many practices within our Inclusion Team were refreshed ensuring each teacher had greater accountability for the progress and attainment of all vulnerable children. Provision maps now include all intervention based in the classrooms as well as activities led by the Inclusion Team for groups including FSM, SEN, G&T and EAL. This, together with rigorous planning and monitoring ensure that all children’s attainment and progress is tracked. Termly pupil progress meetings allow time for discussions between teachers and SLT to see how we can further improve provision for any child who is not making at least adequate progress. All of these initiatives have led to assessment results being significantly above national levels in reading, writing and maths for the last 5 years.

We have recently had our Reception unit remodelled, which has provided a fantastic environment for the whole year group to be taught in one space. This was something we wanted to change, and over recent years have managed to do so. Having this new space has made it a wonderfully enabling environment where children have the space to follow independent learning opportunities.

The ‘Read Write Inc Programme’ was embraced by the whole school in 2012 and has enabled all children to be taught phonics at the level and speed they need. The impact of this was also recognised in our recent inspection report, as was the recent investment in tablet technology and new interactive touch screens in each class.

Our next challenge is to continue to improve our teaching to provide even more outstanding lessons, and to provide next steps more consistently in the marking of maths. These were our recommendations from our recent inspection. As head teacher, I am confident that with the whole school community and an ethos of working together we will achieve those goals.
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School

'To Love and to Share, Believe and Achieve'

Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School is Outstanding (Section 48 March 2014). ‘The leadership of both Catholic life and religious education is outstanding. The quality of the provision for collective worship is outstanding and links with the parish and involvement in the parish are a real strength.’ Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School is a popular single class entry primary school, with enthusiastic pupils, supportive parents and carers, inspirational hardworking staff and a highly skilled governing body.

Our Lady Queen of Peace is a good school with many outstanding features (January 2014). Our recent OFSTED inspection team noted that ‘Behaviour is exemplary and pupils’ attitudes to learning are extremely positive and this impacts on their good achievement.’ Teaching in Early Years is outstanding, innovative and captures children’s imagination. Attainment in Year 2 has been steadily rising over three years and, in 2013, it was above the national average. Pupils also make good and sometimes outstanding progress in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Our pupils are very proud of their school and actively encourage each other to respect all adults. This has created a calm and harmonious environment, where our new Mission Statement, ‘To Love and to Share, Believe and Achieve’ is underpinned by everything we do. The vision and values that pervades the whole school is a model for others to follow.

I joined Our Lady Queen of Peace a year and a half ago, my first year of headship, where the school focus was on raising the quality of teaching through questioning and assessment to ensure that all teaching was at a minimum ‘good’ with some lessons ‘outstanding’. As a Senior Leadership Team we carried out Learning Walks. This enabled us to monitor and evaluate our judgements and to use our findings to promote improvement and develop leadership capacity to high professional standards among all staff.

In September 2014, a new SLT was established, Deputy Head Teacher, Phase Leader for Y2 & Y3 and Phase Leader for Y4, 5 & 6. I am determined to continue to raise achievement and am well supported by the new deputy head teacher. We have a shared ambition for the school and this has contributed to the improvement. We now have rigorous progress meetings for Literacy, Numeracy and RE with a key question being ‘the so what' factor?
The quality of teaching is now checked regularly by leaders. We carry out Head and Deputy Drop-ins on a weekly basis, each week there is a different focus on our observations for e.g. quality of questioning, impact on learning, etc. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils’ learning and progress.

A new marking policy was introduced in January 2014 with the focus on feedback dialogue and the impact on this to further children’s learning. Book Scrutiny takes place by subject coordinators as well as SLT. Staff are provided with individual feedback and action points.

Assertive mentoring was purchased as a way to continue individual learning in which there are individualised targets. The children know what their targets are and how to achieve them as well as what they need to do, in order to reach the next level. Teachers also use this tool as a way of planning to hit the ‘gaps’ in learning.

ICT is now embedded across the curriculum and used effectively to support and enhance teaching and learning. CPD opportunities for staff are available and we continue to share ideas and assess their impact on pupil progress and engagement. Our new school website was officially launched at the beginning of October 2013 as I wanted this to fully reflect our school and the changes made.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly and is well suited to the needs and interests of the pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in outdoor learning and forest schools, a wide range of extra-curricular sport, art and music clubs. Pupils thrive on these learning experiences.

The new refurbished library lies at the heart of the curriculum. It revolutionised the way our library works, OFSTED stated – ‘they enjoy going to the newly refurbished, colourful and vibrant school library and how the visits to the school by authors had inspired them to read and write more.’

Parents are at the heart of our school and community and I want them to play a major part in their child’s learning. KS1 literacy and numeracy, ICT, Healthy Eating and EYFS workshops have also been held for parents. We have strong links with a number of local businesses and they are used to support pupils’ learning.

The Governing body knows the school well and has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. They are passionate about the school and have high aspirations and wish to be fully involved with school life.

We have a very clear vision here at Our Lady Queen of Peace and this is shared by all. Solid foundations, robust systems and high standards of good practice have been embedded and I have every faith that the school will continue to build on its strengths and continue to be a place where we ‘love and share, believe and achieve.’

For more information please visit; www.ourlady.worcs.sch.uk

Bransford Road
Worcester, WR2 4EN
01905 421 409

Mrs G Fennell
Head Teacher
This is our vision statement and our belief! Over the last 5 years we have been through the steepest learning curve and survived to tell the story!! I was appointed in September 2009 and found a school that had so much potential – the community, the staff the impressive building and most of all the pupils.

At Whitehall Junior we do face extremely challenging circumstances

- 55% FSM – Nationality 17%
- Proportion of EAL children 86% - Nationality 24% - with significant numbers of parents new to English.
- SEN 22% - Nationality 19%
- % of stability – movement into and out of the school is high
- School Deprivation Indicator – our catchment area is significantly deprived
- High numbers of different nationalities within school – 20 different nationalities
- High number of families with complex issues

We started by creating a clear focused Leadership Team and set about creating a robust School Improvement Plan focusing on raising standards through improved teaching and learning. Distributed leadership and shared decisions were needed to engage all staff with the school development. Shared responsibility has brought the confidence to make decisions. Regular monitoring and sharing all pupil tracking with all staff developed staff accountability across the whole school and created more transparency. This together with tightly targeted performance management objectives, has focused teachers on improving pupil progress and led to more honest and rigorous self-evaluation.

It also helped to have a good sense of humour!! Initially, the challenges outweighed the positives. We worked hard and at times it was like two steps forward and three back!! The team ethos however, really kicked in then because of the belief in ourselves was the driving force.
We believed in what we were doing. We looked at how to improve our teaching and learning. Well planned and organised paced lessons improved our outcomes. Good, well matched work to pupil’s abilities ensured pupil’s were taught accurately and could make rapid improvements in both Literacy and Numeracy.

A good assessment system was put into place. All staff knew how to track their pupils and reverse any underachievement.

By 2010 our results had improved. We had significantly improved in Literacy and Numeracy. In May 2011 we were visited by Ofsted who remarked that our school had Rapidly Improved and this was our first ‘good’ Ofsted report. They commented on the good Quality of teaching and learning as well as the calm, friendly atmosphere within the school.

We continued our journey and focused on securing our good practice. We introduced an exciting new curriculum and created a whole host of enrichment opportunities such as working with The Royal Shakespeare Company – even having a play written by our pupils performed on stage at the RSC.

We took the children back in time to the Roman era and enjoyed eating Roman food and dressing as Romans.

Y5 enjoyed visiting the Space Centre when they were studying Space.

We want the pupils to enjoy learning and being naturally inquisitive.

Our results have continued to improve and we can see confident learners. We have worked closely with our parents and gained the Leading Parent Partnership Award in July 2013. Our community is really important to the work we do here and bridges the gap between home and school.

We have just had another inspection rating Whitehall Junior as GOOD – ‘pupils make good progress and achieve well because they are taught well’.

Elizabeth Attwood - Headteacher
SEDGEBERROW CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VC) FIRST SCHOOL

“REACH FOR THE STARS”

Sedgeberrow First is a very happy place. Headteacher, staff and governors all share an ambitious vision for the school and work extremely well evaluating strengths and weaknesses. We never stand still and are always looking for ways to improve appointing staff who are on board with the vision and put the children at the heart of everything they do. Ofsted (2014) recognised this. ‘School staff, governors, parents and pupils work together very effectively to continually improve and enhance the education the school provides’.

We are a popular village school with 167 pupils on roll arranged in six single-age classes. Almost all of the pupils are White British and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

Teachers have an excellent understanding of the skills and knowledge they wish pupils to learn and plan lessons thoroughly to ensure they always contain a mix of tasks for pupils of different abilities. Staff are often moved to different year groups to ensure that expectations remain high. We value our Teaching Assistants who are such an asset and essential resource. They work with all ability groups within the classroom and contribute strongly to the wider ethos of the school.

A ‘good’ Ofsted with outstanding aspects (2009) showed us that although EYFS, personal development, well-being and curriculum were all judged as outstanding, we still needed to focus on feedback to pupils as well as refining our use of data to check on pupils’ progress over time. These two areas immediately became part of our school development plan so that next steps were clearly identified, acted on, monitored and evaluated.

The Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy was immediately reviewed and now clearly defines methods for setting objectives and success criteria as well as marking, assessing and giving feedback. The policy is shared with all staff both teaching and non-teaching and upheld by all so children receive clear feedback and know what they have to do next in order to improve thus ensuring a consistency of
school. Our children perform in a local theatre and every child in Year 4 and 5 has free tuition on an orchestral instrument. We are very proud to be an Eco-school just applying for our second Green Flag. The school’s extensive outdoor environment is well used for gardening, environmental work and forest school and we are fortunate to be able to visit a local Farm for educational days linked to our topics. All these activities, along with residential trips to outdoor education centres, are well embedded.

Our current challenges, of course, are transferring to the National Curriculum 2014 and moving towards assessment without levels. Headteacher and Senior Staff are involved in national projects through our local Teaching School Alliance to work on these aspects and provide support to other schools. Other staff are leading cluster initiatives for PE and Maths Calculation contributing to their own professional development and Headteacher is an LLE supporting four other head teachers new to their role.

We look forward to continuing to share our experiences with other schools. Worcestershire is one of the lowest funded authorities and 50% of our school is housed in inadequate mobiles. We have proved that outstanding outcomes can be achieved through good leadership, passion and teamwork despite the challenges of finance and buildings.

Michèle Humphreys
Headteacher of Sedgeberrow Church of England (VC) First School
This section contains a list of Top Performing and Improving Primary schools that have performed well based on the positive aspects of their inspection and on the Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics.
Marshfield Primary School

WE CAN DREAM IT!
WE CAN DO IT!

Marshfield Primary is a community school on two sites. The second site focuses on an outdoor learning curriculum for all pupils in school. All but a few pupils attending the school live in the 30% most deprived communities, with close to half in the top 10% of deprivation. (Index Multiple Deprivation).

In 2009 it was a school causing concern for the Local Authority (L.A). School numbers had decreased considerably. Staff morale was low and five of the twenty teaching staff left at Easter 2009 with a further three leaving in July; a large number of supply staff took their place. Levels of sickness within the staff team were at an all time high. Pupils’ behaviour was unacceptable. Attendance data for pupils was 89% for the year 2008-9. The LA support was extensive, and a new, experienced Head teacher (HT) was required urgently.

It is now unrecognisable from that time.

October 2013

- The number of pupils on roll has risen to over 500, the highest in the past five years. The number of pupils at Marshfield is now about twice that of the national average.
- In the last full year for which data is available, attendance was 96.6%. This is the highest recorded by the school and is 1% higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) remains very high (school 98%, England 18%).

- Over the past four years the percentage of pupils at School Action has fallen by more than half, from almost 1 in 5 pupils to less than 1 in 10. At 9.3% the school figure is below the national average for the first time. There has also been a decline in the proportion at School Action+. At 2.8% this is now less than half of the national average.
- Overall those in receipt of FSM do better than their national counterparts in reading, writing and maths. They do particularly well in reading (+3.1) and in writing (+2.9). Those not in receipt of FSM do broadly similar to their national counterparts.
- The school was judged “Good” in the recent Ofsted with Early Years Foundation Stage being Outstanding. (June 2013) and is judged “Outstanding” by the LA
- School has supported three other schools in Ofsted categories to improve outcomes for children and communities in Bradford
- School Councillors report “Children love to come to school”

How did we do it?

Our aim was not to satisfy Ofsted or the LA but to put the child at the heart of our school improvement, providing an innovative curriculum and relevant learning experiences to engaged and enthusiastic learners. The pupils supported the staff in writing the positive behaviour policy which they called “Being Brilliant”. They then presented this to the School Governors and have continued to report to Governors on school council matters ever since. Governance continues to be a strength of the school. If learning and teaching are good then good behaviour follows and if children own the behaviour policy they will respect it. There are now very few incidents of unacceptable behaviour in school.

Distributed leadership and shared decisions were needed to engage all staff with school improvement. Recruitment of good, adult lifelong learners who loved to teach pupils was paramount. The recruitment process was rigorous and involved the community and children in the process, so that all felt included in our school community. An innovative Senior Leadership team with two non teachers focussing on excellence has resulted in
In the last full year for which data is available, the number of pupils on roll has risen to over 500, the highest in the past five years. The LA support for pupils was 89% for the year 2008-9. The LA support for the school was unacceptable. Attendance data for the school showed that the school was at an all time high. Pupils’ attendance in the school was 96.6%. This is the highest attendance rate in the school’s history. The school has supported three other schools in the area to reach an Ofsted category of Outstanding. (June 2013) and is judged to have made rapid improvements in all Ofsted categories to improve outcomes for pupils.

In 2009 it was a school causing concern for the Local Authority (LA) due to its location in Marshfield, which is rated as being in the bottom 10% of deprivation. (Index of Multiple Deprivation). The school was rated as being in the bottom 20% of schools in the area for the percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals (+3.1) and in writing (+2.9). Those not in receipt of FSM do broadly similar to their national counterparts. The school continues to make progress in writing from KS1 to KS2, whilst also addressing the dip in learning at transition points from one key stage to another. Our investment in ICT, including Kindles, iPads, lap tops and video conferencing has helped us create a relevant curriculum fit for the 21st century.

Our biggest investment of training all staff in Philosophy for Children (P4C) has brought about higher order thinking skills and children and staff who respect others views, express their own views with tolerance and discuss philosophical stimulus and questions. P4C has meant that speaking and listening at Marshfield are now of a high standard and have great value in the classroom.

We developed our own school improvement Service starting with P4C and we have now trained LAs, HTs, teachers and support staff in 42 different settings. We have introduced Self Evaluation, the School Improvement Planning cycle, teaching and learning, Early Years and the HT has been the professional Partner for 4 HTs in Bradford.

Our work on raising aspirations for our school community with our Enterprise Curriculum has led us to the only school in Northern England to have the CEI award for Enterprise education and our Enterprise leader spoke at the CEI conference for business leaders in London to celebrate our whole school approach to life long learning and preparing our children for a working life.

The pupils now want to be doctors, dentists, teachers, entrepreneurs and as each year group has a business mentor from the local community they can see it is possible. As our standards improve year on year we always remember our school motto which the children created.

We can dream it! We can do it!

Colleen Jackson Head teacher Marshfield Primary
Blakehill Primary is a larger than average community school in the North East of Bradford. Our Ofsted inspection in 2007 noted strengths but stressed that standards in Numeracy & Literacy needed improvement.

A commitment to raising standards was boosted by rigorous and regular tracking of pupil performance. Sharply focused staff training was delivered to improve subject knowledge and expertise. Teachers were involved in pupil progress meetings to discuss each child’s performance and strategies were devised to address underachievement. All children have their own writing portfolio where their progress can be tracked. In addition, children are given regular quality feedback identifying what they do well and have individual targets so they know how to further improve.

With improved teaching and learning came improved outcomes. English and Maths standards improved and in 2010 our Ofsted inspection praised the progress that we had made; ‘This is a good school where pupils achieve well’.

The report identified the need to focus on improving writing standards with an emphasis on writing across the curriculum. As a result, development of writing has been at the centre of our school improvement planning and levels have improved significantly. We have now been above the National Average for the last four years and in 2013 we achieved our best ever results for pupils attaining Level 4 in Writing.

This success has been achieved by the whole school working together and giving writing a high profile. Display boards showcase high quality writing across school. Children’s writing is celebrated in ‘Star Writer Assemblies’ where children’s efforts are shared and praised.

We have also put an emphasis on giving the children good reasons to write across the curriculum. In order to foster an enjoyment of writing we provided opportunities where the whole school had a shared stimulus. The events have included having a ‘Top Gear Day’ where a local garage loaned us a top of the range Porsche for the children to admire and in some cases get in the driving seat! In addition we had visitors re-enacting the lives of medieval knights complete with sword fight, historical Birds of Prey displays on the school field and more recently a performance by the ‘Mighty Zulu Nation’ theatre company. As well as visitors in school we encourage out of school excursions to provide a purpose for writing. These include residential visits.
in Years 4, 5 and 6, exploring the local area, places of worship, contrasting localities and even the Houses of Parliament.

Blakehill has also worked closely with the 16 primary schools in the Bradford East 1 Local Achievement Partnership (LAP) to improve our commitment to community cohesion. In 2010 inspectors had recommended that we needed to do more to ensure our pupils had an increased understanding of the multi cultural nature of modern Britain. Since then our schools have been part of projects to get children in Year 4 to work together, learn new skills and involve parents. We collaborated to help devise a Heritage Trail with a local historian and from this we published a book for our LAP. We have also worked with schools to stage a drama production highlighting Bradford’s place in history. In 2013 our theme was Music and Dance and resulted in a CD and video of the performance being shared to hundreds of parents.

ICT has also played a large part in our progress. We have invested in improving our infrastructure and training. In 2012 our Ofsted Subject Survey Inspection rated our leadership and management as ‘outstanding’, since then our school blog has become an important feature in communicating with parents and provides a global audience for the children’s writing.

At Blakehill we have successfully raised standards while keeping our children at the heart of our plans. Blakehill’s ethos is centred on the motto ‘Together We Can’. By working together towards a common goal, providing children with challenges they find interesting, we continue to succeed.

Trevor Patterson
Headteacher
Blakehill Primary School

For more information visit;
www.blakehillprimary.co.uk
Deepcar St John’s CE Junior School

WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL MATTERS

Deepcar St John’s CEJ is a smaller than average junior school with 190 pupils. The majority of pupils are white British of which 25% have Special Educational Needs. The catchment area is Deepcar, a small town 10 miles north of Sheffield and geographically isolated to the city along one of the valleys. The school has close links with St John’s church, who regularly take Collective Worship. As a school we attend church to celebrate major festivals and for our Leavers service in the summer. Our children run the Christmas and Leavers services.

The incumbent Headteacher joined the school, as a new Headteacher, in September 2008 when the school was in Notice to Improve. Previously to this, the school was in Serious Weaknesses. Five weeks after the start of the new term, the school was placed in Special Measures. This was a great blow to the staff who had not been complacent, but with clear vision and a mandate for change, they worked tirelessly to achieve it.

The Deputy Head went on long term sick, one teacher retired and another part time teacher left. For five months the school was without a Deputy Head and struggled to move forward as a result of reduced capacity. In April, a Deputy Head was drafted in from Task Force and the school was also assigned a Lead Headteacher to support the Headteacher. This added the capacity which was needed and the school moved forward rapidly. In this, the remaining teaching and support staff were fully on board with all initiatives. They worked diligently to bring change across all areas of the school and never lost faith in the vision of coming out of Special Measures to ‘Good’.

A consistent approach was applied across the school to pupil’s learning behaviours, as they were mostly passive with little ownership. The children were taught what was expected of a good speaker, listener and learner with both independent and collaborative learning skills. A consistent message went out to all members of the school community that everyone was of one mind. To present this new consistency, display boards in the classroom and throughout school were totally re-vamped and new Learning Walls went up to promote higher levels of independent learning. Corridors displayed work in a similar way, with Success Criteria arrowed in explaining the Learning Intention and Context. The impact was immediate. The sense of unity was on display along with the belief that everyone in the school had high expectations and were Teaching and Learning in the ‘Deepcar way’.
Staff were enskilled in aspects of ‘good’ lessons, which matched Ofsted criteria and took ownership of their own practice resulting in an immediate improvement observed in classrooms. Teachers also had the opportunity to observe good and outstanding teaching across school which added to their improved practice. A ‘Development week’, lead by four advisory teachers, planned with, coached and mentored teachers to improve yet further.

Pupil Progress meetings were held every half term with rigorous tracking of progress for all groups of pupils. Interventions were put in, but the emphasis was always on Quality First teaching and teaching to GAPs for the first five minutes of every lesson. Developmental marking, alongside individualised targets focused the children’s learning and further sharpened teacher’s planning. Governors immersed themselves in what was going on and were the ‘critical friend’. A strategic monitoring group was also set up comprised of key governors and SLT members, who met once every half term to monitor the progress of the school.

Twenty months after going into Special Measures, the school came out to ‘Good’ and there was great celebration. The drive forward was relentless as the focus was on changing the curriculum to a Thematics approach. This ignited teachers and children alike, particularly the boys. Key training on learning styles and boy friendly lessons moved teaching and learning forward again. The Big Picture Curriculum Overview allocated time for curriculum requirements and also allowed for creative flare - our ‘cardboard classroom’ week has been of interest to many. Skills were tracked to ensure continuity and progression. Our June 2012, inspection specifically looked at baseline assessments and progress for all groups of pupils. The report stated we were ‘on a rapid path to outstanding’. Progress in 2013 of 13.9APS, from our baseline, included 34% SEN and 20% of children who had joined the school with either W or level 1 at KS1.

Deepcar St John’s continues to thrive as a school with a ‘family feel’ and staff, children, parents and governors are eager to continue on their forward journey.

Headteacher
Mrs B Cordle

For more information please visit: www.deepcar-st-johns.sheffield.sch.uk
West Meadows Primary School is a 1 form entry primary school with a fully integrated, purpose built foundation stage unit. The overwhelming majority of our pupils are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of children with special educational needs is above national averages and our FSM/Pupil Premium figures are more than double national.

Our 2011 OFSTED Inspection report stated ‘West Meadows Primary School is a good school, firmly set on an upward path due to the purposeful vision of the head teacher and the commitment by staff, at all levels, to achieving this.’

Baseline data clearly shows that our children enter Foundation Stage below national and make good and outstanding progress throughout school which results in them leaving at the end of year 6 in line with, or above, national.

We are highly focussed on improving all elements of the school’s work. Our ambitions are very clearly communicated to pupils, parents and carers and we all recognise that the school has to sustain and build still further upon improvements made. Through pupil and adult surveys we ensure that we take into account the views of all stakeholders and act upon views and suggestions collated giving feedback and updates when required.

Our pupils are good ambassadors within the local community. Our school council represents the school at all locality celebrations and commemorations. They are responsible for conducting regular health and safety reviews with the Governing Body feeding back their findings to staff and children.
Our learning council evaluates the quality of learning and teaching, the learning environment and the behaviour and safety of children within school and feeds back to staff and Governors. They are currently analysing attendance data and discussing how to improve attendance in order to raise standards within school. Pupil voice is a powerful tool to move learning forward at West Meadows.

Raising attendance is a priority. We have raised the profile of attendance in school with the children through a series of planned activities that reward 100% attendance over set periods of time. To ensure motivation we consulted school and learning councils and provided activities that the children identified as ‘cool’. We have raised the priority with parents by giving weekly updates on the West Meadows Weekly [school newsletter] and have brokered additional support from the Educational Welfare Service which allows a far more personal approach to be adopted with regular visits to provide support when needed. Current attendance figure is 96.2%.

High quality pastoral care is at the heart of the school’s work. A sensitive mentoring programme of support enables the children to share concerns safely and confidently. Parents are confident to approach school and are given help and support as and when needed. Multi agency working is the norm and parents are supported to access extended services provision as and when appropriate.

We have examined the purpose and structure of our curriculum and have developed a reorganised curriculum that ensures our pupils benefit from absorbing topic work with engaging titles such as Celestial Skies, Pirates from the Past, Dangerous Animals or Into the Deep [to name but a few of our units of study.] Each topic is launched with a memorable event and closed with a celebration of learning. Parents are invited to join in with both. We have raised the profile of writing throughout the curriculum by posing credible reasons for writing within our topic planning and planned speaking and listening opportunities are maximised throughout.

We are very fortunate to have a level 2 forest school practitioner on our staff team. She is responsible for the promotion of the outdoor learning environment. We have our own forest school or ‘Wild Walk’ which forms an integral part of foundation stage provision and practice. We are currently developing the use of the outdoors to further support and extend learning throughout the rest of school.

What next? We have very recently, successfully, become a convertor academy and have chosen to join St Mary’s Academy Trust which is a Trust comprising, currently, of five like minded schools with high aspirations and an agenda firmly driven by improving the life chances of all it’s children.

For more information please visit: www.westmeadowsprimary.org.uk
CASTLEDYKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Castledyke is situated in Barton, North Lincolnshire, on the banks of the Humber. We have 313 children, almost all of whom are from white British backgrounds. Our school is coming up to its centenary next year but we have had a substantial refurbishment in 2004. We like to think that we combine the old with the new!

We have an, above average; number of pupil premium children, and sometimes a big percentage of our children are described as ‘vulnerable’. We have a number of specialist staff who support our children including an excellent behaviour team. Castledyke also hosts located behaviour provision for the local authority; in this capacity we take children from other schools who have had exclusions and are vulnerable to educational failure.

We have an, on site, children’s centre and day care setting. Some of the Governors are the Directors of the day care company. We work hard to ensure that we support all of the needs of our children and families so we work with a number of agencies.

We have some children with barriers to learning and we found a few years ago, that despite changing our curriculum, and all of our further efforts, our attainment hit a plateau. In order to kick start it, and move forward more quickly, we decided to move staff around in quite a radical way. We had staff with many strengths but we were not utilising them effectively. All staff changed year groups some changed key stages, new leaders were put in place in key areas. We then felt that we were in a strong position to move forward. However, we did not anticipate the time that it would take for the staff to really get to grips with their new roles. Results the following year were lower than we had ever had before; we were below thresholds. However, there were green shoots of progress to be seen, and we held our nerve and continued with our strategy. The following year, 2013, we had our best results for a number of years!

Some new initiatives also supported us in moving forward. We had been accused of having ‘inconsistency’ across the school; this in progress and teaching. To address this we put in place some whole school programmes. We adopted, ‘Read Write Inc’ as our phonic programme and we all went on the training, bought and appointed a Manager who had further specialist training. The whole school worked on this scheme every morning in vertical groups. We saw our results on the phonic screening jump from 48%, below national averages, to 76%, 7% above national averages.

We adopted ‘Assertive Mentoring’ for assessment of maths and, ‘Big maths’ as a support for planning and progress. All children again go into vertical groups every Friday. In this way we were able to tailor the curriculum, and fill gaps where we saw them.

We also made a start on the ‘Pie Corbutt’ strategies for writing and these are proving very supportive in helping our children to see that they can write.

Whilst focusing on the basics we knew that we needed to continue to ensure that our children had access to a very broad curriculum. This is necessary to support language their skills. We still went on many visits and took part in many activities. We want all children to experience a residential visit, at least once before they leave Castledyke. We have started to take Key stage 1 on overnight residential to Austerfield.

Theatre visits and drama are also important to us and we hold the gold Arts Mark.

Behaviour is an area that we constantly develop and we introduced the ‘red, amber, green’ system across the school in all areas. We were amazed at how quickly the children picked this system up. We now feel that our children are very clear about their responsibilities and actions.

Finally, in November Ofsted came for their visit. They awarded us a grading of ‘good’ in all areas. We would have to say that we have fought hard to get to this grading under the new framework. Now we have moved on again and we are on our journey towards ‘outstanding’.

Rosie Pugh
Headteacher

For more information on the Castledyke primary school please visit: www.castledykeprimary.co.uk
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For more information on the Castledyke primary school please visit:

www.castledykeprimary.co.uk
MICKLEFIELD C.E. (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL

It is said that Micklefield lost its heart with the closure of the pit. Low aspirations, pockets of deprivation, drug use and third generation unemployment linger on here, but there has been plenty to be proud of in the past and we encourage pupils to take pride in their heritage and to contribute to reviving the sense of community.

I began my headship in 2008 knowing that the school needed drastic action ... and quickly! Ofsted’s view of the learning environment in 2007 was ‘uncared for’ while ‘detrimental to the lesson’ described one staff member. Staff morale was low, behaviour a major issue and families were leaving the school. The number on roll dropped from over 130 to 85.

I met staff individually, including the superintendent and cleaner, and asked their opinions. The main issues were the curriculum - dull and not age appropriate; low expectations of behaviour -staff and pupils shouting, pupils fighting, slamming out of classrooms and swearing - and staff morale, “Don’t worry, we’ve been told we’re rubbish.” one teacher quoted resignedly.

In 2012 we were delighted to achieve the second highest value added in the Outer East Leeds area; results were above floor targets, with some pupils progressing 3 levels. The 2013 Ofsted report judged the school as good in all areas, with SMSC and Forest Schools featuring as outstanding elements. So....what changed?

The village used to have a colliery band, so the superintendent and three members of staff volunteered to learn brass alongside the pupils; we now have a small brass band and participate in the local schools’ Big Band concerts. Being a church school with a lively visiting priest strengthens community links and pupils are also involved with the Regeneration Board’s improvements to the village.

Existing schemes of work were scrapped and staff encouraged to create learning opportunities for the pupils through any topic that would enthuse them, and consequently their pupils, working outdoors whenever possible. Subject leadership was reallocated and the curriculum redesigned by staff, ensuring NC coverage and skills progression.

Progress in the core subjects is assessed and recorded electronically half-termly by staff, then analysed by the SLT to ensure pupils and groups make at least good progress. Class action plans detail Pupil Premium children and pupils at risk of falling behind, targeting them over the next half term.
Five pupil-sourced school rules were introduced, alongside a positive behaviour system supported by SEAL targets and celebration assemblies. Peanut the monkey joined the school family, regularly relating his adventures in assemblies so that the children could help him to use SEAL strategies for good behaviour choices.

In 2009, Early Years and Year 1 moved into a spacious, well-equipped Family Unit created by combining three classrooms. An outdoor play area, including a ship and a canopied area, enables learning to take place outside in all weathers. A Children’s Centre satellite was accommodated, offering high-quality sessions for parents with children from pre-birth to five, maximising pre-schoolers’ potential and offering parenting support.

Racking our brains over the continued lack of progress of some pupils below age-related expectations, despite changing the curriculum, the learning environment, behaviour and raising staff morale, led to a ‘light bulb’ moment. Our CPD focused on the work of Guy Claxton, Will Ryan, Chris Quigley and Ian Gilbert’s associates and we renewed efforts to tackle the barriers pupils face through primary school and beyond, caused by low emotional and social development on entry, combined with the low aspirations of a depressed community.

We increased the focus on the 5 Rs, resilience, resourcefulness, relationships, reflection and risk-taking, by organising all staff and children from Year 2 to 6 into Nurture Groups. Pupils’ key staff members are aware of their progress in the core subjects, SEAL and the 5 Rs and Friday afternoon Nurture Groups focus on these as they bake, act, sing, paint etc. We invested in Forest School training for the Assistant Head; all year groups go into the woods to experience den-building, exploration and woodcraft skills.

The impact was quickly evident in the pupils’ increased self-esteem and there is a growing realisation that they can change themselves, their peers... and maybe even their community and the world!
September 2009 heralded the long awaited opening of a new school within a new building. Hillside Primary School arose from the amalgamation of two well established, caring and supportive schools. Hillside is located within an area of considerable social and economic challenges. We have a very high percentage of families in receipt of free school meals, of children with Special Educational Needs, and families receiving support from Social Services. The ward has locally the highest percentage of workless benefits, the second highest percentage of reported domestic violence and significant medical issues. Our community is extremely diverse, with children from a wide range of countries, with an equally wide range of languages. During the last two years our work has been significantly affected by families struggling in the current economic climate.

Then......the rollercoaster dipped dramatically. Poor SATs results placed us at the bottom of every conceivable list. We redoubled our efforts with a clear and determined focus, leaving no stone unturned. We were on a mission! Priorities were sharpened considerably and our focus was unashamedly to improve literacy and maths standards. Never again would we be in this position.

We forged ahead with a staff team fully behind the measures put in place. The LA placed us in a group of underperforming schools, insisting that an ex HMI basically performed a mini Ofsted on us – despite only having had one relatively recently. This did nothing for
morale, until he confirmed that our plans were ambitious yet realistic, and we were well on our way to achieving them. We employed the services of an external maths consultant to audit provision and we then provided in-house training. As this was such a mammoth task, we focussed on ‘tying’ everything together, using Performance Management for all staff to ensure accountability. We introduced termly pupil progress meetings where levels and progress are discussed in depth and actions taken if necessary. Meticulous tracking systems were introduced and each child is rigorously monitored. Thorough assessments and identification of next steps for each child have ensured results in maths improving dramatically from 37.5% to 64% (2012) to 79% (2013) at level 4+, with similar improvements in literacy.

Throughout all this we aimed to improve teaching overall to at least good or better, through Performance Management. Last year Ofsted returned, and despite their initial consideration that we may be placed in a category, they agreed we were ‘good’ due to the outstanding progress our children make and the good and outstanding teaching that we secured.

There were many deeply personal crises at Hillside during this period - leaving an exhausted and frequently depleted Senior Leadership Team. It was imperative to reconsider the staffing structure to provide careful and detailed succession planning. This re-structure also ensured opportunities for career progression, and a valuing of staff and their ongoing commitment and hard work.

So...how did we do it? I would suggest through three main areas –

1. A thoroughly hard working and committed staff team who support and uphold the ethos of the school, and a supportive Governing Body.
2. The tenacity and dogged determination of the tight Leadership Team and strong core subject leaders who had and have very clear goals and development plans.
3. An almost obsessive focus on the end goal, with a refusal to be swayed by external bodies, even when relentless pressure is exerted.

Results this year moved us from third from the bottom in the local authority (approximately 194 schools), to 52nd. We haven’t finished yet!
THORNE KING EDWARD PRIMARY

‘I Can! You Can! We Can!’

Thorne King Edward Primary is a community primary school which serves an area of high deprivation. When I arrived at the school in January 2007 results had historically been below national average at the end of each Key Stage, and in the previous year no children had scored 78 points on the Foundation Stage Profile.

Following returning to school after the Christmas break, the children didn’t seem to be happy to return to school and low self-esteem was evident. The first thing we did was to try to reverse this situation developing a ‘can do’ culture, supported by implementing a number of merit award systems to help build self-esteem, the school’s slogan quickly became ‘I Can, You Can, We Can!’. The school’s Friday Afternoon Achievement Assembly became the most important event of the week. Our aim was to ensure the children wanted to be at school, were happy, were building confidence and achieving success.

At the time OFSTED and DFE gradings and targets were based on attainment, however we sent the message to staff that if we were going to achieve high achievement levels the children needed to make outstanding progress in each and every year. In January 2007 we set the aspiration that the children needed to make at least 4 points progress in Reading, Writing and Maths in every year.

To support this, 4 assessment periods were put in place: End of October Half-Term; 3rd Week in January (Mid Year); end of March; and Late June. The expectation was that children would make at least one point progress by the end of each assessment period, and at least 2 points by the January assessment window. Thorough analysis was undertaken of assessments by the head teacher and phase leaders, simple but clear tracking systems were put in place to monitor progress and to be able to quickly identify children who had not made enough progress.

Information from this analysis drove the School Improvement Plan, INSET provision, improvements in Teaching, and Pupil Progress Meetings. High quality plans were put in place to support children who had not made enough progress both in terms of the Quality First Teaching, where we have challenged and supported teachers to be outstanding, and intervention programmes. We scoured the country to find high quality interventions and we ensured staff who were delivering these were well trained, they were monitored effectively both in terms of provision and outcomes, and there were exit strategies in place to ensure the gap didn’t widen once children had completed the interventions; children were then carefully tracked with three and six month reviews.

As part of the drive for high standards we initially targeted maths as an area in which the children could excel. The outcome of this has been that over the last few years we have consistently been in the top 25% of schools nationally for value added in maths between Key Stage 1 and 2, being in the top 11% in 2012, and APS results in 2013 were Sig+ in our Raise Report. In 2013 57% made 3 levels progress and 100% 2 levels progress.

To give a real context for writing, many children didn’t have experiences to write about, we implemented a new ‘Learning Challenge Curriculum’ with an integrated cross-curricular approach. This was supported by high quality modelled writing. This led to big increases in our Writing levels.

Reading has taken us on our biggest journey, having taken on board best practice in developing reading from across the world, and we developed our Guided Reading models from this best practice; children do this twice each week. This is supported by high quality reading interventions: Reading Recovery, FFT Wave 3 and our own designed reading interventions. This has had phenomenal success with very high reading levels in place from Year 5 downwards.

As a result of all of this, results at the end of KS1 are now Sig+ for reading and all subjects, and slightly above national average for maths and writing. Results have been consistently above national average in KS2 with value added being Sig+. The school was graded Outstanding in October 2014 as a result of the achievement levels, the focus of our children and the high proportions of outstanding teaching observed. However this isn’t the end of the journey; we expect even better things in the future as results are currently higher in each succeeding year group.
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CASTLE GROVE INFANT SCHOOL

If we believe that our main concern is to ensure that our children make progress and achieve their potential in the widest sense, then all aspects of teaching and learning and the climate within Castle Grove Infant and Sandal Endowed CE VA Junior School, are leading towards that vision. The values and philosophy we promote, underpin the management of the schools, the curriculum, the ethos and the way we work together as a corporate unit. We are a health promoting school, where everyone has the right to be heard and good mental and physical well being of all-children and staff is the key. As a healthy school we seek to improve children’s health and well-being with the support of our specialist staff, accredited Nurture Group provision, commitment to delivering a wide range of out of school hours learning; sports, music, arts, modern foreign languages, swimming and opportunities to attend holiday sports camps host by the school.

Our success is measured by attainments in standard tests and tasks, in achievement in the wider sense and in the happiness and emotional well-being of our children. Values are based upon our personal commitment to the school, our knowledge and deep understanding about the way children learn, our flexible approach to providing a child steered curriculum, our care for all children, and research and evidence from the wider world of education.

We know that intelligence is not fixed and that potential is great, therefore we have high yet realistic expectations of the children whatever their background, race or gender, also bearing in mind their age within the year group. We also know there is a wide range of intelligences and that all children have something to offer the world. The children need to know this for the sake of their confidence and self esteem, a crucial factor in their learning and happiness. It is important, therefore that we aim to engage the children in as wide a range of activities and experiences as possible, and to acknowledge that learning involves our feelings and emotions as well as our ability to think and act.

We understand that children need motivation in order to learn and that self-esteem is vital for motivation. We therefore plan learning activities which foster independence, confidence and responsibility and that have low stress yet high challenge. We are a school where children have a voice and an input into how the school works.

We also appreciate that learning takes place and is effective when children are given opportunities to think for themselves and are free to ‘have a go’, in a risk free environment. It is important that our children know what they are learning and why? and how each little bit fits into the ‘big picture’. This helps our children to know what to do to get better. It is in this positive nurturing ethos that our children understand the skills they need in order to learn, progress, achieve and succeed.
Our approach to curriculum delivery is developed from Early Years Foundation Stage pedagogy and practice. A play based, creative curriculum is employed throughout the whole of KS1 and since Federation with Sandal Endowed CE VA Junior School in September 2009, throughout KS2. Outdoor Learning, the Arts, Sport and PE are highly valued as curriculum drivers in ensuring outstanding achievement, progress and attainment in all subjects is achieved and equally valued. Examples of this can be seen in the recent awards being achieved in RE – REQM Gold, PE – Association for PE Quality Mark (Distinction) whilst attainment throughout the school in core subjects is recognised as being consistently above National expectation particularly at Level 3 and L5 in Reading, Writing and Maths. We find our creative, practical approach to learning is also having a positive affect at KS2 with attainment @ L5 in both English and Maths in KS2 tests surpassing FFTD estimates (2013) ( only 1.9 % achieved L5 English in 2008/9 pre Federation)

Our children are eager to learn. Motivated and inspired to succeed primarily due to the holistic approach to curriculum delivery and the practical element to their learning which ensures the two schools are meeting and broadening the learning needs of all of their children. We find that by providing opportunities for working outdoors not only has a calming effect and a feel good factor, but also develops a team approach, working together. Working in small groups with a variety of ages and learning needs means that children are practising the schools ethos of support, mentoring and kindness.

It is also crucial within our Federation that adults feel valued which is evidenced when views are taken seriously, their training needs are discussed and understood and that they too are at times, free to ‘have a go’. There is a climate of everyone learning and talking together. Collective teacher efficacy is a significant predictor of children’s achievements. Research shows that securing improvement comes through the hearts and minds of teachers.

Parents are seen as equal partners in their children’s learning, giving and receiving information, talking and relating to teachers, trusting each other in their efforts to support the children. Through our involvement with the local community e.g. neighbouring schools, churches, charities, neighbours, we demonstrate that we do not exist in isolation, but as part of the world.

In conclusion, we aim to be an inclusive school of equals. Everyone equal of education, training, respect, love and care.
BEMPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

WHERE LEARNING’S FUN,
PURPOSEFUL AND CHALLENGING

Bempton Primary is a small rural school with around 100 pupils from age 3 to 11. I was appointed as a teaching Head in April 2012 and found a school that had seemed to have lost its way. Prior to taking up the post I was released part time from my school to start building up relationships, assess the situation and begin to implement necessary changes.

Over the previous few years results had dropped, the Head had retired and an interim Acting Head had covered for 2 terms. The school only had three classrooms and each had mixed key stages. There were two full time teachers and 2 part time teachers covering the large class of 37, Year 4 to 6 children and a high number of Teaching Assistants.

There were inconsistent expectations in the standards of behaviour, little tracking of pupils to ensure progress and a team that needed leading and support to know how to move the school forward.

The main challenges were to up skill all current staff, decide on how to extend the current provision to 4 classrooms and ensure there were no split key stage classes, put in place regular tracking and pupil progress meetings, audit current provision, especially in writing, and employ new staff as I knew the job would require my full attention.

As a staff we created our own school vision stating that we wanted the best for every child all the time. The child was at the heart of everything we decided on. We all agreed that every child has the right to the best education and opportunities we could give. Building a team with a shared vision and ownership was the catalyst that ensured progress. Staff meetings were focussed on improvement in teaching and learning.
The Local Authority provided support in monitoring current provision, and tailored support where necessary, to raise teaching and Teaching Assistant support to Good and Outstanding. Staff were trained in assessing writing and the ‘Big Write’ scheme was introduced, along with ‘Write Away Together’, to raise expectations and ultimately the standards of writing across the curriculum. In 2013 we achieved Level 6 writing and The Ofsted Inspection in 2014 wrote:-

“pupils apply their imaginations, their love of language and understanding of grammar to write vivid, emotive and evocative description of alien worlds. The outcome for each pupil was stunning.”

Rigorous pupil tracking, shared each half term with all staff, developed staff accountability and transparency across the whole school. Performance management was carried out with all teaching and non-teaching staff focussing on improving pupil progress which led to joint moderation of work not only within school but also other local schools and the Local Authority. Subsequent pupil progress meetings ensured timely, effective and well evaluated interventions which immediately started to show results. Pupils had their own personal targets for Maths and English as well as lesson learning objectives and sub levelled success criteria. Children have ownership of their own learning and as a result of our Marking and Feedback policy our pupils are involved in editing and improving their own work as well as peer marking and sharing learning and understanding.

Through our School Council we worked on developing a new Positive Behaviour policy which quickly resulted in a consistent approach and improved behaviour and attitudes to learning and working together.

We introduced a long term plan that was cross curricular as well as a whole school approach over a two year cycle and focussed on enriching the curriculum. Working together across school on a common theme ensured better cohesion, team building, greater understanding and, in a small school in the f40 group, a better use of resources on a limited budget.

Rates of progress are continuing to improve within our ‘big family’ ethos of high expectations, care and support. The Ofsted Inspection in January 2014, who rated the school ‘good’ wrote:-

“The school’s data confirm that progress is continuing to accelerate.”

Staff morale is high and everyone works closely together as a team with the children and parents and are looking forward to the future of exciting challenge and continuing improvement.

Catherine Garghan
Headteacher of Bempton Primary School
Old Bank Junior, Infant and Nursery School

Breaking Down Barriers to Learning

Old Bank Junior, Infant and Nursery School is a smaller than average community school. Numbers on role have increased and continue to do so. More than 60% of the children are entitled to Free School Meals. The majority live within the worst 10%-20% area of social deprivation. Percentage of children with SEN far exceeds national averages. There is a high percentage of mobility; 50% of the present YR 6 cohort, for example, joined the school less than two years ago. The ethnic mix of the school is predominantly white British with a significant number of Hungarian Gypsy Roma children (40 in 2010, 24 in 2014). The majority of children fall within one or more of the identified vulnerable groups within school; indeed the few who don’t become a vulnerable group of their own.

Following my appointment at the school in 2001, along with my Senior Leadership Team, I identified the barriers to learning which needed to be addressed if the children were to make the progress needed to close the gap academically. The barriers have changed over time however they tend to be centred round the areas of social, emotional and behavioural, attendance, parenting skills and parent aspirations.

A significant number of children enter Nursery with: poor skills of language and communication; speech difficulties due to dummy and bottle usage: poor self care skills, for example toileting; limited experience and knowledge of the world, insecure attachments; delay in developmental movement due to lack of play opportunities; developmental delay as a result of substance misuse during pregnancy; impoverished lifestyles; limited parenting skills; behaviour difficulties as a result of exposure to violence in the home and health issues particularly dental and diet. The strategies employed by the school as we strive to break down these barriers include:

- Provision of a language rich environment
- Early identification of need and issues prior to children attending nursery through home visits and signposting parents to agencies who can support. Identification of need continues throughout school.
- We employ a full time, highly skilled, Parent Support Adviser who works with parents on developing their skills in preparing their children for school and raising aspirations. She has worked with parents on programmes such as Nearly at Nursery, The Child’s Journey, STEPS and Family Links.
• We have provided a Breakfast Club for all children from Reception to Year 6. At present this is sponsored by Huddersfield Town Football Club. This not only fosters a readiness to learn but also improves social skills.
• We introduced a Nurture Room where children’s needs around attachment are identified using the Boxall Profile and addressed using various programmes. Outcomes are positive as analysis of data reveals that the majority of children access the curriculum with greater confidence and success.
• We use a developmental movement play programme, Jabadao, to compensate for lack of early play and movement opportunities provided in the home.

The influx of Hungarian Roma children has had a positive impact on the school in terms of widening the cultural experiences of all our children, for example art and music. The negative impact has been on attendance and attainment: firstly a number of the Roma children live outside the catchment area and can’t always afford transport to the school; secondly Roma children do not start school until they are 7 in Hungary so many parents choose to keep their children at home and thirdly there is a high rate of mobility. The strategies to improve attendance have included:

• Employment of a Gypsy Roma Bilingual Support Assistant who acts as an inspirational role model in conveying expectations of the school to parents and the importance of education. She has led the Roma community in a number of initiatives.
• Employment of an attendance officer one day a week to keep on top of issues as they arise
• Introduction of a reward scheme whereby children receive a golden ticket for every full week they attend resulting in half termly rewards including shopping vouchers.
• Attendance has improved from 87% four years ago to 95% at present.

We still have a long way to go however rigorous monitoring systems reveal that barriers to learning are being broken down enabling children to access the curriculum and intervention programmes with confidence and enjoyment.

We measure success in terms of pupil progress and the value added from their starting position. For children at Old Bank their journey begins before they start Nursery and finishes when they leave for high school.

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<th>2013 Key Stage 2</th>
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<td>All pupils</td>
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<td>FSM</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEN</td>
<td>103.2</td>
<td>99.4</td>
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‘Old Bank is a good school. Its main strengths are the effectiveness of senior leaders in driving improvement, high staff morale, pupil’s achievements and their behaviour.’

OFSTED May 2012
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