

Cleaswell SIP Visit July 2020

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Context

The summer term 2020 School Improvement Partner visit was postponed due to Covid-19. The Head teacher has continued to engage with the SIP throughout the management of the crisis in order to ensure educational standards remain at the forefront of thinking and planning. This is an unprecedented time and planning for the beginning of the autumn term, when all children are expected back to school, is well under way at Cleaswell Hill to ensure all children and young people's needs are met.

The Head teacher and all school leaders have worked relentlessly to ensure the school is safe and at times this has been difficult due to the lack of statutory guidance and the uncertain/unworkable nature of information from government. As all SEND establishments differ in their population profile centrally generated guidance is often not reflective of the provisions needs. Cleaswell has prioritised attendance for those children and parents in the greatest need, liaising effectively with agencies and families to ensure safe outcomes. This school visit focussed on evaluating present standards and planning for further development.

Governors have remained in close contact with the school and their leadership has guided decisions on health and safety including safeguarding.

The summer term SIP reporting headlines have been used to inform this report. (boxed)
[Agreed actions are noted in blue.](#)

Summary of progress made in the autumn and spring term

- The week before 'lock down' governors agreed the school's strategy for improvement. This work culminated in extensive evaluation, whole school review of vision and values, realignment of assessment processes to reflect the needs of pupils and a collective, shared agreement on the priorities for improvement.
- Pupils progress and achievement data evidences a strong upward trend across all key stages. This follows extensive review of the relevance and validity of data to ensure the most vulnerable pupils gain from highly specialist approaches to learning, which are quantifiable. Collectively, across the whole school 75% of targets were on track to be met or surpassed.
- Target setting leads to staff focussing on underpinning skills, which support pupil's generalisation of their understanding in functual situations. This includes supporting pupils' ability to communicate and this is at the heart of the curriculum. Reading and linking this to purposeful activity is highly effective in helping pupils develop independence.
- Curriculum review and high levels of scrutiny regarding evaluation procedures has led to change in support of even greater impact for learners.

Detailed Analysis and Evaluation of safeguarding and Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare.

- The effectiveness of safeguarding is evidenced in the school's overall ethos and in the detailed and robust policies and procedures it has in place.
- The school's strong multi-agency links enhance and support safeguarding across the school.
- Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. In school, pupils say they feel safe; a view endorsed by their parents and carers.
- There is a named governor in place for safeguarding. She is experienced and has a lead role for safeguarding within the LA. She is a regular visitor to the school.
- Safeguarding monitoring has been ongoing throughout lock down. A recent governor report has supported the school's approach to ensuring the highest standards of protection for the pupils attending school in the summer term
- Senior leadership support staff to maximise pupil's access to the curriculum by providing clarity and consistency in the management of behaviour. Staff report they feel 100% supported by leaders in developing strategies in enabling pupils to learn to the best of their ability.
- Pupils' views are regularly sought as are the views of their parents/carers including in relation to behaviour. They express strong support for the school in its management of behaviour.
- Record keeping is robust and accurate. It plays a key part in self-evaluation and is used to identify any concerns and to plan further improvement, for example in relation to reducing the need for interventions by targeting support more precisely to address individual needs. This supports personal development on an individual basis.
- Progress in relation to behaviour over the autumn and spring terms has included the on-going review of policies and the refinement of the curriculum to meet individual needs more precisely.
- Over the year personal development and welfare have been kept under regular review, and provision has continued to be enhanced including opportunities for purposeful outdoor learning.
- Personal care and pupil well-being are at the centre of the school's work and all pupils are treated with the highest respect. Relationships across school are highly positive enabling pupils to make excellent progress commensurate to ability.
- The school is aware of the need to focus on pupil's health and well-being, including mental health as a means to secure learning outcomes. The schools strong culture associated with the child at the centre of decisions on change influences all aspects of practice in relation to readiness to learn.
- Pupils are confident about their learning; they seek support and persist when faced with challenges within a solution focussed approach. This is being further developed across school within a metacognitive pedagogy. The management of Covid has stalled this initiative.
- Attendance is monitored robustly and follow up occurs on a daily basis.

SIP's overall judgement for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

- Personal development, behaviour and welfare at Cleaswell Hill are outstanding across the school, including in early years and in the sixth form. This has been reinforced during the unprecedented management of the pandemic.
- As the school population has changed so the curriculum has been regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets pupils' individual needs. There is a strong emphasis on personal development as staff are aware of the link between well-being and attainment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps them to be able to express themselves and to discuss matters which interest or concern them. They show respect for others with different views, and are well prepared to become thoughtful, caring and active citizens in school and beyond. This is commensurate to ability/diagnosis of SEND.
- Incidences of poor behaviour are rare and where they do occur, they are managed effectively and sensitively. There is a strong sense of mutual care and respect across the school. Bullying is very rare and staff/pupils work collaboratively on preventing its occurrence.
- Pupils are safe in school, and are well taught how to keep themselves safe beyond the school appropriately and within the context of their severe and complex needs.
- Safeguarding has the highest priority and governors provide high levels of support and challenge in driving standards further.

Evaluation

Cleaswell Hill employs the highest number of staff within any SEND provision in the local authority.

Staff have risen to the challenge of 'remote' contact with families and are fully supportive of the Head teacher's management of the Covid crisis.

[Consider collating parental feedback on the school's performance early in the autumn term in support of further potential change/development.](#)

Attendance figures have increased steadily and risk assessments are in place to support safe practice. A learning walk was carried out during this visit and 100% of staff appeared calm and settled. When asked about how staff were managing the challenges involved in supporting learning, all spoke with confidence and commitment regarding the children 'come first'. The Head feels the culture of collaboration, trust and resilience has been strengthened and Cleaswell staff have 'gone over and above' to meet children's needs and assist families.

The deployment of staff has been based on the specialist needs of the pupils, however leaders have strived to ensure staffs personal issues have been accounted for in terms of their work load and attendance in school.

The school has made necessary changes to performance management targets for staff due to the demands of the pandemic; the management of change and necessary safe adaptations of operational procedures.

Governors and leaders are committed to supporting staff well-being.

The Head teacher is seeking advice regarding his performance management in preparation for the autumn terms review.

Within the context of working in difficult circumstances during the summer term consider collating staffs views on their well-being and job satisfaction in order to reflect and learn from analysed results.

School has adapted the arrangements for school leavers and the transitioning of new pupils. 'Bubbles' are organised by peer groupings or according to needs, however it is unrealistic to expect the majority of pupils to understand the concept of social distancing. Risk assessments include how to mitigate risk and evaluations of daily activities and pupil presentation involve phase leaders, who in turn seek appropriate support from the HT, DHT, Business lead and AHT.

The most vulnerable pupils thrive when there are high levels of specialist support, a bespoke approach to the curriculum and consistency and structure throughout the school day. Transitioning these pupils back into school following, for some, a long period at home, was well planned. De regulation is a feature of all pupils in phase 3 and many within phase 1, due to their diagnosis of ASD. Staff within these phases have realigned priorities and worked to re-establish socially acceptable 'normalised' behaviours. The school continues to provide therapy in support of pupils with an ASD profile and this is supporting teachers and TAs to build specialist knowledge. The school strategy was to consider employing their own therapists with the same or similar terms and conditions as the teachers. This would enable closer alignment to the school's vision and values and supporting a therapeutic approach more consistently within Cleaswells context.

The Head teacher wishes to further this improvement strategy by recruiting a specialist OT within the first phase of the plan. Further work on the recruitment of a therapist, aligning the 'therapeutic' vision with the overall school strategy. Considering expectations, as only one therapist will be employed by school, within the context of an overall cohesive approach with agency staff and NHS deployed therapy provision. Discussion has already taken place regarding how Cleaswell can establish an integrated approach to therapy and education. This is critical to positive outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils in school. The recruitment of a therapist to a senior post will support the school to plan for more effective provision to meet the changing needs of the school's population. There is a trend that children now attending Cleaswell, within early years, have more complex and severe SEND.

The Self Evaluation processes within school are well established and lead to effective prioritisation within School Improvement documentation.

There is a need to ensure school improvement documents report upon:

- Updates to adaptations necessary to manage the health and safety within the context of the pandemic. If this leads to changes to priorities this should be accounted for within the improvement strategy.
- The full range of the work in relation to any actions designed to improve behaviour further in support of staff CPD and within the context of the changing needs of the school's population. This may require prioritisation within years 1-3 within the strategic plan.

There is a detailed recovery plan in place to establish, which pupils will need intervention programmes to boost key learning concepts especially in literacy and language. The Head teacher has reassigned a specialist teacher to lead the intervention programme with support from the assessment lead.

Further clarity on which children to prioritise for the interventions programmes and analysed data to inform teachers of pupil's baseline so they can target class-based interventions in support of key outcomes. A system of collating progress and achievement rapidly to effectively re-establish pupils, pre lockdown, achievement and subsequent robust target setting will ensure pupils are on track to meet or exceed expectations.