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St Andrew's CE Primary School Ramsbottom

Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark Accreditation Visit

St Andrew's CE Primary School, Ramsbottom

12th July 2019

St Andrew's CE Primary School has been part of a small group of schools in Bury working towards the Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark (DAQM) over the last four years. They have attended centrally based cluster meetings and other CPD events and have hosted cluster meetings in their school to support the sharing of practice. The project has been led by the SENCO Louise Barnes and TA Sally Sadiq under the direction of the head teacher, Damian Marsh.

What is distinctive about the way school meets the needs of all dyslexia learners or those at risk from dyslexia?

The development of dyslexia awareness across school has been a key element of the School Improvement Plan for all of this time and will remain so as developments continue and the progress so far is further embedded in everyday practice.

School have worked in line with a DAQM Action Plan which has systematically set out the process which led school to this accreditation visit. Resources have been allocated to the project and team members, have been committed to developing dyslexia aware practice. Additional funding has also been sought through a local fundraising scheme and the school are now in a position to purchase additional equipment for ICT.

School have organised a thorough CPD programme on site throughout this period, from whole school induction sessions delivered by the co-ordinator, to training sessions delivered by outside specialist teams. Individual members of staff have attended central training provided through the Bury Learning Collaborative to supplement this.

The school team have been proactive in the promotion of dyslexia aware practice and have openly accepted advice and support from Bury LA in developing their practice. The head teacher and SENCO gave an honest report of the school's challenges, providing a transparent picture of their personal journey.

How does school address dyslexic learners' personal attitudes, values and personal development?

A great emphasis is placed on pupils' emotional development in school. Mood plates can be found in every classroom. Mindfulness sessions take place regularly and the school now employs a counsellor.

The ethos of the school shows that there is a strong emphasis placed on inclusion, the wellbeing of the children and the whole Christian family.

In every class, all of the students are valued through 'superstars & shout outs' and the different roles and responsibilities the pupils are given.

There are processes in place to deal with harassment and bullying and the attendance of all pupils is monitored. The attendance of target pupils is in line with national expectations.

Comprehensive systems are in place to record and disseminate relevant information regarding pupils with literacy difficulties, along with other learners with additional needs, to all teachers, through pupil passports.

School have done a considerable amount of work to raise pupil awareness of dyslexia and other physical difficulties and unseen differences. They promote positive role models through assemblies and displays in addition to the work done in classrooms and with individuals. For example, a display to celebrate the achievements of a range of celebrities with a variety of difficulties can be found in the main corridor and an assembly was led by a past pupil who has dyslexic tendencies. School use stars and superstars all around the school to celebrate the non-academic achievements of pupils, some of whom were those with literacy difficulties.

How effective are teaching and learning for dyslexic learners and those at risk from dyslexia?

Adults create and maintain a very focused and calm learning environment, for example, through the use of 'silent signals' and visuals signs. These were used effectively without the need for additional language and adults were then able to direct children through the organisational aspects of the school day. This included eliminating unnecessary noise or raised voices. Learning is both collaborative and inclusive throughout school: children were observed learning the same things but in different ways; difference was purposely normalised, for example, through access to specialist equipment such as Irlen overlays and toolkits with various equipment available to all children.

School carry out their own screening and other assessments to identify pupils with literacy difficulties. These assessments are used to set targets and to organise special educational provision.

There are procedures in place to induct new staff into the dyslexia aware learning environment. For example, there is an induction pack 'Classroom Guide to Dyslexia,' for new staff members and additional training is organised either in-house or through external providers. Supply teachers and visitors are also given a list of classroom non-negotiables.

What is the quality of the curriculum received by dyslexic learners?

Planning takes account of the needs of different groups of pupils, in particular, those learners with literacy difficulties. Planning acknowledges a range of teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the subject and where necessary,

accounts for individual as well as group needs. The curriculum is delivered in an engaging, practical and multisensory way, with emphasis on learning through enriching experiences such as 'SALAD' days. (Speaking and listening all day.)

There is a strong focus on reading evident in school, including specific focus on authors. Much time has also been spent over the last year refurbishing and relaunching the library for school and home reading. Parents are actively involved in the day to day organisation of the library.

School has also paid a great deal of attention to the wider reading curriculum: book corners are accessible in every classroom with comfortable seating, themed with an author focus.

How well does school ensure equality of access and opportunity for dyslexic learners or those at risk from dyslexia?

Every classroom presents as a tidy, well organised and a calm learning environment. Well labelled and accessible resources allow children to develop independent skills from a young age. Each classroom is also organised to support group work and co-operative learning strategies are in place to encourage pupils to work collaboratively and to their learning strengths. Each classroom contains an easily accessible working wall for each curriculum area which are colour coded throughout. These are used effectively to support learning.

Colour is used to maximise learning in every classroom, for example, pastel shades on interactive whiteboard backgrounds, coloured markers in use by all teachers and TAs, cream coloured paper in use by adults and pupils alike, coloured overlays/reading rulers are available to all pupils.

Display is used both to support learning and to celebrate the outcomes of learning. Where possible, displays are at child height and much consideration has been given to ensure access to all learners, for example through the use of pictures and photographs to reinforce the meaning of captions, signs and labels. Good quality, clear labelling is a consistent feature of support for learning across school. Labelled 'work in progress' can be seen across school as learning unfolds. Some displays were effective when writing was kept to a minimum and the quality of work shone through without a need for any detailed descriptions.

Pupils are offered a range of alternative methods to record their learning: laptops were observed in use in some classrooms. The books showed evidence of a variety of alternative methods of recording such as mind maps, photographs, story maps, time lines. Additionally photographs from drama and hot seating were also evidenced within the pupils' books.

Access strategies were visible in every classroom; for example, visual timetables, were in every teaching area, updated to reflect the learning activities for the day. The importance of learners knowing what will come next cannot be overestimated; the SENCO recalled a non-SEN pupil commenting how much he was enjoying the introduction of visual timetables because it meant that he knew what was happening next throughout the day.

There was a clear marking policy in place, this is currently under review in light of recent questions raised from using Alternative Methods of recording and the impact of marking on the pupils and teachers as a whole.

How well does school work in partnership with parents, other schools and other members of the community to meet the needs of dyslexic learners and those at risk from dyslexia?

School continues to work to establish strong links with parents ensuring that all parents with differing needs are equally able to access school information, through letters, phone calls and text messages.

The parents interviewed reported they felt listened to and described the excellent support that they had received from school. Parents trust class teachers and had clearly been given appropriate advice, personalised to their child's needs. Parents were very happy with the support their children were receiving in school. One parent spoke to the SENCO about how much difference the school has made to each of her children, who presented with literacy difficulties and how much they had all blossomed whilst in their care. Parents spoke about the homework grid and the increased enthusiasm for the tasks presented each half term. Examples of homework completed were displayed throughout school.

Parents described regular meetings with school staff including regular parents' evenings, as well as welcome meetings at the start of each new school year. Parents also acknowledged that school were approachable and they could discuss their child's need at any time.

For pupils with additional needs, extra activities were organised to support transfer to high school; additional circle time sessions for pupils to discuss their worries and to ask questions, pupil passports devised for the transfer of information, additional visits to receiving schools.

How well is the school regarded by the dyslexic learners and their parents?

The pupils interviewed demonstrated that they were happy at school; they were most excited about the range of 'clubs' on offer at school and the clear emphasis on outdoor play was reflected in their comments. Pupils also commented on the work of the PAIS team who offered a lunchtime club for pupils who may not want to access the outdoors. Pupils knew their own strengths and weaknesses for example and one pupil mention that school would always give you things to help with your work.

Pupils knew some strategies to get help when they were stuck, including asking their 'partner' and using the toolkit.

The pupils interviewed said they enjoyed every aspect of school. When asked if there was anything they would like to change about school, a different time for maths was the only thing mentioned.

The parents of the target pupils who were interviewed expressed delight that their children enjoyed coming to school so much. Parents talked about the noticeable improvement in their children's confidence and happiness as a result of the support they were receiving. Parent's commented that the homework grids lead to additional learning at home e.g. making different electric circuits.

All four parents interviewed said that they would recommend this school to other parents and emphasised that they could not fault school. They felt that St Andrew's were doing more to support their children's progress than other schools would, One parent said that she liked the 'new way of thinking and

teaching' that taking a dyslexia aware approach had brought over the last two years and was proud of school for embracing it.

In what ways does school's Dyslexia Aware good practice impact on the learning of other pupils?

Inclusive Quality first teaching can be seen throughout, allowing all learners to access have equal access to a varied curriculum.

School reported that as a result of improvements in dyslexia awareness across school, all pupils had more individual choice in learning, for example, choosing how they would record their learning, which in turn had improved participation and had secured better inclusion for all learners. They felt it was less obvious which pupils had SEN and which did not.

School felt that the consistent approach to teaching and learning resulting from becoming dyslexia aware had impacted greatly on standards. They felt that consistency came through use of a common language for learning as well as through sharing the same approaches to teaching and learning.

What is working exceptionally well?

Display is a strength. Consistency across school allows pupils to move to a new learning environment with ease. Display is used effectively to promote independent learning. The most effective display were those where language was reduced.

The successful implementation of alternative methods of recoding has allowed staff to feel confident when allowing pupils to choose how they record outcomes. This has also had an impact upon marking and feedback and teachers have reviewed how they can ensure that marking is meaningful and effective. A review of the marking policy is now taking place.

Learners with additional needs or special educational needs were barely visible in any classroom such was the level of inclusion in learning.

The handbook created for staff is an excellent booklet to support staff with being/becoming dyslexia aware. It is clear and concise and allows new members of staff, supply teachers and visitors to understand the expectations of the school as a whole.

Dyslexia friendly practice was also evident in 'SOCKs,' (before and after school provision.)

All staff are clearly engaged and committed to creating and sustaining a Dyslexia Aware learning environment. However, particular examples of good practice that school may want to share and celebrate are listed below:

1. Reception: the newly acquired outdoor learning space was used effectively to promote independent learning through exploration and investigation. There were ample opportunities to bring learning from the classroom to the outdoor space through mark making activities for example.
2. Y1: Display was used effectively for pupils to be independent and responsible learners with roles and responsibilities displayed. Children were also able to articulate their own understanding of dyslexia awareness and recognising different ways of learning.
3. Y1/2: Many displays were at child level within this classroom, they were accessible and interactive. Practical learning was a strength where doing

and making was used to inform writing. E.g. baking and decorating biscuits.

4. Y2: Homework models were proudly displayed around the classroom. Resources in this working space were well labelled and easily accessible.
5. Y3: alternative methods of recording were used and displayed effectively within this classroom. Pupils were able to describe what they had done and why they chose to record in this way.
6. Y3/4: Independent learning was promoted in this classroom through interactive display which included use of 'post it' notes. There were also plenty of opportunities to extend learning. The editing station was also used positively for learners to improve their work.
7. Y4: Display was used extensively to promote independent learning. The environment was rich with language supporting all areas of the curriculum. Routines and structures of each day were very clearly organised.
8. Y5: Working walls were a strength within this classroom. Displays supported learning. Displays were interactive and the learners had made contributions to display. Changing mind-set display was used effectively within the classroom to support pupil resilience.
9. Y6: this is a stimulating classroom with independent learning at the fore. All equipment was easily accessible and resources to assist with learning such as vocabulary were used effectively.

Through the school clocks were used effectively to engage learners and support routines as well as practical skills to support telling the time.

Alternative methods of recording were also well used to promote the independence of learners and to allow the element of choice to feel natural to all students.

What might school consider in moving forward?

School already have a clear direction of travel to further develop their approach to dyslexia aware teaching and learning, in particular:

1. To involve all pupils more in the setting of their own targets
2. To develop the use of ICT to support and enhance independent learning.
3. To continue to develop and strengthen links with all parents. (E.g. invite to SALAD days)
4. To continue to develop the use of the library through increased accessibility for all including the use of Audio books and on-line books and allowing parental sessions for book choosing.

In addition to these outcomes, school might consider the following points for continuing improvement:

1. Use 'superstars/shout outs' to actively promote the well-being of staff as well as pupils.
2. Work with the SENCO and SLT to actively share good practice through staff discussions, learning walks and viewing/reviewing working walls and their purpose.
3. To continue to actively and openly discuss/share with pupils what impact being dyslexia aware (and inclusion as a whole) has upon everyone in school and in particular how this may positively affect self-esteem.
4. Continue to hold refreshers for all staff for dyslexia awareness and dyslexia friendly strategies, including requested and or arranged visits from external agencies (e.g. Cognition and Learning)

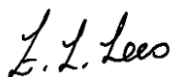
5. Build upon and strengthen the practice of working in collaboration with all stakeholders to review and revise policies which impact specifically upon the personal, social, emotional, mental health and well-being of all pupils to ensure that the inclusive nurturing strengths of the school continues to grow.
6. Ensure the growth of dyslexia awareness is maintained through areas specifically identified within the School Improvement Plan e.g. Target setting for all pupils.
7. Explore the impact of Speech Language and Communication Difficulties and the effect this has on literacy difficulties. Consider 'Wellcomm' as a resource to identify, target and support children with DLD.

As a result of this accreditation visit, the team from the Dyslexia Aware Consortium are delighted to be able to award the status of our Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark to St Andrew's CE Primary School Ramsbottom.

Dyslexia Aware Consortium members conducting the accreditation:

Emma Lees & Ellie Lorenzo Bury & David Barrett, Bolton

Date: 12 July 2019



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Date: 12th July 2019

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Our Ref EL/DAQM

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Date 12th July 2019

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