

5. Area of Excellence Accredited Early Years Foundation Stage Provision

...Learn indoors! Learn outdoors!

Stimulating environments to enhance and extend learning for all pupils.

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

Children begin their Knowsley Lane journey from very low starting points, with communication and language and personal, social and emotional development being exceptionally low. Knowsley Lane's EYFS department has continued to grow and develop. The rate of children's progress is rapid, with a high emphasis on building a strong basis of language development inside and outside. Assessment is accurately used daily, weekly, half-termly and on a termly basis. Children's needs are prioritised and planned for in the highly adaptable indoor and outdoor environments, with staff who put learning at the heart of every decision. One cannot fail to be impressed by the organisation, diversity, excitement and adaptability of the indoor and outdoor learning environments. One complements the other and both provide excellent stimuli to ignite every child's curiosity and accelerate progress. Staff value the contribution that parents bring to school and they constantly strive to deepen links with the community. Parents are encouraged to be active learners in their children's school life. Leaders work relentlessly to engage parents, ensuring that they understand the importance of the value of education. In-depth, purposeful workshops inform parents of key learning, how they can incorporate learning opportunities inside and outside the home, as well as establishing strong foundations for the rest of the Knowsley Lane journey! Leaders have seen the greatest impact with parents through the programme of education for adults of children in the EYFS. Throughout the year, the Family Learning courses are fully booked with 12 – 15 adults in attendance every week. The focus of the sessions is tailored to the needs of the community, such as maintaining a budget, healthy eating, importance of school attendance, productive play inside and outside, phonics, reading

5.2 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

Over the last three years, outcomes have continued to be in line with the national picture from exceptionally low starting points, as well as diminishing the gap for disadvantaged children over this time. The rate of children's progress across the department is rapid, with a high emphasis on building a strong basis of language development. The impact of the indoor and outdoor learning environments is evident in the accelerated progress children make. Knowsley Lane's EYFS department prides itself on 'staying fresh' and reviewing the indoor and outdoor learning environments in the light of the changing needs and interests of the children. The EYFS team continues to strive to improve their practice and keep abreast of current research and ideas to support children's learning both indoors and outdoors. There are many opportunities for the team to receive EYFS specific training and they also work closely with colleagues in the trust. The quality of learning environments inside and outside are equally matched with innovative use made of the exceptional space. This ensures that children have frequent opportunities to practise and consolidate early speaking, listening, reading and writing skills within a wealth of exciting, appealing activities. Knowsley Lane is currently supporting one school in the local authority (new to Vantage Academy Trust). Significant support is being deployed to that school's EYFS setting, with a focus on developing the provision as the additional adult in the room! This is accelerating progress, particularly for disadvantaged children. Leaders are also providing specific EYFS support to

Manchester-based schools from within the trust. Both the principal and deputy principal (the EYFS leader) are involved in internal trust quality assurance reviews where they review different EYFS settings across the trust.