

5. Area of Excellence

Accredited

Driving culture and curriculum through your vision.

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

All stakeholders have together created a shared vision through which everyone is enabled to 'shine'. This vision is at the heart of the school and drives everything it does. Pupils, staff, governors and parents know that this is what they strive for. The vision is driven by explicit aims of 'engagement, high expectation, resilience and dignity'. These flow through the daily life and culture of the school and are constantly reinforced by all staff. When policies are created or revised and the curriculum planned, the question of how a decision is going to support the school to achieve its vision, is always asked. It sits at the heart of the school's positive behaviour policy and is referred to constantly with pupils. Worship, assemblies, professional development, the school development plan and governor action plan are all underpinned by this vision, aims and the Catholic ethos. It is interwoven through the code of conduct expected of all stakeholders and through expectations and relationships with parents. A focus on the 'learning powers' of empathy and listening, questioning and reasoning, collaboration, planning, imagining, perseverance, revising and absorption, supports the achievement of the vision. Pupils are reminded of these 'learning powers' and praised for displaying them as they work and socialise. Consequently, resilience and independence are developed well in enabling pupils to 'shine'.

Expertise has been developed because all stakeholders have been involved from the outset and are therefore partners in creating the vision. Consultation and collaboration have been key to gathering and refining information. Therefore, whatever is being developed is created from a common understanding of how it fits within the vision. All professional development is related back to this. Senior leaders support middle leaders, who in turn support staff, to ensure that at all levels there is the same consistent message. Any next step actions for the school have the vision embedded and new staff are provided with clear induction and support so that they are quickly immersed in this shared culture and common understanding. The rapidity with which two relatively new senior leaders have become experts in promoting and supporting this strategy is testimony to the robust and long-term sustainability of the area of excellence.

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

Having the school's vision at the heart of school improvement and central to all decision making ensures consistency. Consequently, the good level of development for children

at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has remained consistently above the national average for the last four years, as has the proportion of pupils meeting expectations in the Year 1 phonics screening check. At Key Stage 1, outcomes for reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard are above the national average and attainment for both expected and the higher standard in reading is very strong at Key Stage 2, as is progress over time. Hence, evidence of consistency and aspiration is clearly evident in most outcomes. The school is now focusing on a greater proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in writing and mathematics, following their successful achievement of this in reading.

5.3 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Name: Michelle Forrest

Title: Headteacher

Email: stjohnfisher.de@knowsley.gov.uk

6. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

The school continues to work with the Aspire hub to share best practice and further develop the quality of its provision.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.