

Assessment for reaccreditation

School: The Leys Primary and Nursery School, Stevenage, Hertfordshire	School more able coordinator Joanie Garner
NACE lead assessor: Barbara Firth	NACE support assessor: N/A

School context

- The Leys Primary and Nursery School is a larger than average primary school in Stevenage catering for pupils aged between 3-11 years. Since the first accreditation the school has had a change in leadership with the current headteacher being appointed in September 2021.
- The school's role is declining and currently there are three forms of entry in Years 5 and 6 and two forms in Reception through to Year 4.
- The school was judged by Ofsted to be good in March 2018. External reviews by the local authority confirm that the school continues to be good.
- Pupils enter the school typically well below age related expectations. They make at least good progress across the school to reach standards above the national average. Their achievement by the end Key Stage 2 in all measures has been consistently above the national average over time. Current data indicates a similar picture of high achievement for 2022.
- The vast majority of children are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified as disadvantaged and/or having a special educational need is higher than the national average.

Summary Statement

- The leadership of The Leys Nursery and Primary School is ambitious and aspirational for every child.
- Staff know the pupils and their families very well including both their strengths and barriers to success. As a result, they are able to provide a curriculum that both meets individual needs and stretches pupils as far as they can go. As a consequence, attainment and progress continue to ensure that pupils are very well prepared for secondary transfer at the end of Year 6. Equally, success in sporting, and cultural activities is as highly prized and celebrated.
- Pupils are articulate and eager learners who are extremely well-supported and celebrated.
- The leadership of the school encourages all staff to develop their pedagogy through professional development opportunities and, as a consequence, the school is a reflective learning community with the capacity and determination to innovate and develop.

Progress towards previous identified key action points

The assessor notes that, good progress has been made against all identified key actions.

1. Provision and outcomes

- To build on the back of work already in place led by Middle Leaders to increase the breadth of identification by focusing on the development of subject specific identification criteria in the Foundation Subjects – particularly Humanities and Art. **Achieved - All subject leaders**

have produced subject specific criteria and guidance on how to meet the needs of the more able in their domain.

- To strengthen the focus on attainment and progress, continuing the rise in the percentage of pupils who achieve 'Combined' Mastery Level (Reading, Writing and Maths). **Achieved – Data shows that since the first assessment the proportion of pupils attaining greater depth has increased overall. The school acknowledges that there is a gap between that achieved by disadvantaged pupils and others and has strategies in place to reduce this..**
- To raise the profile of more able Learners and support for parents through the new school website. **Achieved – the website has a useful and well-used section on the website which provides parents with useful and supportive information as well as celebrates the successes of their children.**
- Develop the existing local school partnership to include staff training and engaging with other ideas with a focus on the Challenge Award. **This was impacted on by the pandemic and remains work in process.**

2. Where teaching and learning for challenge is good or better

- To promote more opportunities for pupils to develop their own questioning skills to drive their learning forward.
- To continue to develop the focus on metacognition using thinking strategies.
- To build resilience within more able learners by utilising mini plenaries within the learning instead of merely reviewing learning at the end of the lesson.

The school has made good progress with the above and continues to refresh and embed good practice and pedagogy.

Summary of strengths for provision and outcomes

- The leadership of the school have created an environment in which pupils can have high expectations of themselves and make good progress. There is a relentless pursuit of determining which pedagogical approach best suits the pupils of the school so that they can and do develop into confident, effective, articulate and independent learners.
- Opportunities for enrichment are thoughtfully planned so that pupils have the experiences and memorable moments that will enable them to be successful in their own community and beyond.
- Provision for the more able and talented is robustly monitored, evaluated, and very ably led by the highly skilled and enthusiastic more able coordinator. This ensures that all staff are well-informed and fully committed to raising achievement for more able pupils.
- The school's policy for more able and talented provision is robust and explicit in the identification of, expectations and provision for more able students. Subject leaders have a clear vision of what makes a more able learner in their discrete subject ensuring that those pupils with ability can achieve highly in any subject.
- Talent as well as academic success is nurtured and equally celebrated. This includes those activities that pupils are excelling in outside of the school.
- Those pupils that are exceptionally able or demonstrate multi-exceptionality are extremely well supported. Useful and informative IEPs are in place and case studies demonstrate the good progress these pupils make.
- The robust systems for monitoring pupil progress ensure that any underachievement is quickly identified and responded to in a timely and supportive manner.
- Transition arrangements both across the school and on to the next stage of education are increasingly robust.

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and enriched. It demonstrates a clear progression from the early years and across Key Stages 1 and 2. There is a good balance between both knowledge and skills acquisition in all subjects as evident in the good quality work seen in pupils' books.
- Half-term projects and termly STEAM (Science, technology, engineering and mathematics) days provide rich opportunities for extended research and learning across the school.
- Teachers' subject knowledge, high expectations and the pedagogy they deploy ensure that high standards are sustained over time and that pupils make at least good progress during their time at the school.
- The climate for learning is positive and engaging. Pupils are very well-behaved and have good relationships with their teachers that are both enjoyable and conducive to hard work.
- Pupils are developing into articulate and confident speakers because the balance of 'talk' in the classroom is increasingly weighted heavily towards the pupils. Pupils were observed in effective collaborative and purposeful talk.
- Pupils spoke positively of the way they are challenged in lessons citing, in particular, the different ways that teachers support them. As one pupil said, 'The teachers explain things very well, we learn lots of new things and there is always challenge in what we do – we don't have to start at the same place if we already understand.'
- The school's focus on developing a culture which encourages a 'love of reading' has been highly successful. 'Whole Class Reading', reading competitions and challenges have encouraged pupils to read more for pleasure.
- The whole staff is a reflective learning community. Professional development is focused on developing pedagogy that will impact positively on all pupils and particularly for those that are more able and talented.
- As demonstrated in the school's case study and as observed in lessons and in pupil's books, the school's new marking and feedback policy is developing into an effective tool to support pupils in developing their own metacognitive skills and reflect on their learning. Pupils were confident in talking about how having metacognitive skills helps them reflect, recall and extend their learning.
- The student voice is very strong and focuses on both how they learn best as well as other responsibilities across the school including the pupil parliament, being sports ambassadors, global citizens, reading buddies.
- Monitoring and evaluation are very thorough and both parents and governors are kept very well informed about both children's well-being and academic development.

Summary of strengths for teaching and learning

Sessions were observed in across the school in a range of subjects. The quality of provision was consistently good and in the best examples the following features were observed:

- Teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding of how to 'challenge' all pupils.
- High expectations of responsibility for pupils' independence in their own learning.
- A focus on metacognition and reflection as integral to the learning process.
- Supportive strategies to ensure that pupils can develop good memory skills and recall their learning. For example, the 'I still can....' task at the start of most lessons gives pupils an opportunity to recall prior learning.
- Pupils given the opportunity to reinforce their own understanding through helping others.
- A good balance of teacher and pupil talk with a focus on purposeful learning through collaboration. As one pupil said, 'Discussion is a big part of the learning.'

- Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning. They are increasingly confident, independent, and enthusiastic as they go through the school.
- Engaging resources, including ICT and varied differentiation of activities which promoted learning in depth.
- Teachers' use of high-level subject specific language used consistently and accurately.
- Opportunities for pupils to present their learning in a wide and varied manner which both deepens their understanding and increases confidence and articulacy.
- An extremely positive environment for learning which celebrates and highlights exemplar work and outcomes.

Areas for development

- Post Covid, refresh classroom pedagogical approaches to re-establish strategies such as different ways to choose who to answer a question other than 'hands up'.
- Enhance the school's More Able policy by:
 1. being explicit about the excellent provision that is made for exceptionally able and multi-exceptional pupils.
 2. adding subject specific criteria and provision for challenge to the school's policy as an appendix.
- Re-establish and extend opportunities to enrich the curriculum and extend opportunities for 'cultural capital'.
- Ensure that staff have access to and use the resources on the NACE website.
- Enhance the outdoor area of the EYFS so that it is as language rich as that observed indoors.
- Review the use of teaching assistants so that they consistently provide focused support for pupils' learning including support for more able pupils.

Key issues

Key action points:

*to be included on the school's **Key issues matrix***

- Continue to close the gaps in attainment at greater depth between those pupils that are disadvantaged and others.
- Continue to find ways to collaborate with and share excellence with other schools in supporting their more able pupils to achieve their best.
- Continue to build upon the findings of the case study by embedding the pedagogical approaches to metacognition across the school.
- Continue to find ways to raise aspirations through, for example, joining the 'Brilliant Club'; establishing links with universities; inviting the school's alumni to engage as role models.

Date of Challenge Award reaccreditation

24th May 2022

NACE lead assessor signature



Date Challenge check-in due

(+ 18 months)

December 2023

Deadline for next reaccreditation

(+ 3 years)

May 2025