

Southampton School Improvement Officer Report – SACRE monitoring

School	Banister Primary School	
Head teacher / email	head@banisterschool.co.uk	
Chair of Governors / email	PK McBride	
School Improvement Officer	Alison Philpott	Date of visit: 1/7/19
Other attendees	Jackie Meering, Elizabeth Jenkerson	

Context

The SACRE is in Year 4 of a 6 year cycle of monitoring visits to establish and increase the knowledge and understanding of Southampton schools focussing on Collective Worship and Religious Education. This has been developed with Head teachers and will include all schools over a six year cycle. The purpose of monitoring is for the SACRE to meet their statutory duty to report to the LA any schools which cause concern for example, with regard to not fulfilling the requirement for collective worship of wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character; not following Locally Agreed Syllabus delivery if appropriate to school. It will also enable the SACRE to know where good practice lies within schools across the city.

At Banister Primary School the visit is as a result of a Head teacher request and place in cycle.

Summary finding

- The school meets its statutory requirements for Religious Education and Collective Worship and has evidenced strong practice in Religious Education during the visit.
- The evaluation the RE leader has undertaken demonstrates that the known position of RE and Collective Worship is accurate, and has enabled leaders to prioritise actions for improvement.
- Pupils recognise and value their RE learning and the opportunity to share their own life experiences.
- The school has good practice that it is able to share with other schools and has established the effective use of the locally agreed syllabus.

Agreed actions

Agreed action	Deadline and intended impact
Develop a key symbol to identify Collective Worship time	For September onwards so the distinctiveness of Collective worship (reflection) time is identifiable wherever it takes place
Review policy/ subject statement in light of improvements this year in RE ensuring a balance between faith and non-faith views is visible	In Autumn term to ensure it is reflective of the improvements and changes made
Continue to monitor RE so that the new RE leader can assess the effectiveness of teaching over time with regard to progress and attainment and report this governors	Plan for monitoring for 19/20 so it can take in the opportunity to monitor progress and attainment which can then in turn be reported to governors

Collective Worship findings

- The school has a well-planned approach for Collective Worship which is broadly Christian. The school offers collective worship in a range of ways: together in the hall, in key stage

groups, year groups and in class groups.

- The school is highly inclusive and the values it promotes are visibly demonstrated by the positive ways children confidently expressed their own thinking in the film shared during the visit.
- Pupils moved in and out of the hall respectfully. They were looking forward to the assembly and also discussing the film shared on their way out
- A series of key questions around the theme of 'What is Religion' (a video made by and for the children about religion in their school and shown for the first time) was used within the Collective Worship observed that pupils gave thought to appropriately. This could be strengthened with the use of a symbol that can be used across all locations e.g. hall and classrooms to identify the distinct moment of reflection time in the school each day.
- Values were an inherent part of the assembly observed and opportunities are planned to incorporate British Values throughout the assembly programme as well as across the curriculum
- Displays across the school strongly support the ethos and values of the school community
- During discussion with pupils they were very happy to discuss the themes and content of their various opportunities for CW. They all felt that their faith/no faith experiences were valued and were happy to share – be 'experts' as part of their CW experience.
- The plan for Collective worship, whilst broadly Christian is sufficiently flexible when the school wishes to respond to wider events
- There have been very few requests by parents/carers for withdrawal from collective worship.

Religious Education findings

- The new subject leader for Religious Education is stepping into leadership for the first time, well supported by senior leaders and is rightly passionate about her subject. She has continued to refine planning in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE following attendance at a range of training opportunities. This has been disseminated effectively to teachers across the school.
- Regular time in Professional Development Meetings with teachers enables the RE leader to effectively cascade her learning from her own training and development
- The school has a well-planned RE provision. It has strong evidence in books, from pupils and leaders that the cycle of enquiry approach supports the building of knowledge and understanding within RE over time across the school.
- In Year 6 pupils showed high level of inference in the tasks offered based upon their own knowledge and prior learning giving the lesson discussions depth and a philosophic approach.
- One pupil in Year 3 said "I like RE because it helps me know more about my friend as she is religious and I am not".
- Activities were well planned in all lessons visited. It will be important to monitor the teachers planning to ensure that all are following the cycle, even in Year R so as to analyse effectiveness of teaching on the progress and attainment of pupils.
- Learning activities in lessons visited were well differentiated to support pupils of lower literacy ability, but there was not always as much planning visible in all the lessons visited to extend those pupils who may be stronger in RE skills than their written ability allowed.
- Philosophy for Children approach is strongly supporting the pupils ability to make decisions about their thoughts, feelings and opinions which is supporting the learning in RE well.
- There is a clearly focused action this year to embed assessment across the school in RE.
- The cycle of enquiry approach and Locally Agreed Syllabus are a part of staff CPD
- Leaders are passionate in developing capacity in the delivery of high quality Religious Education together with enabling pupils to place their learning in context of understanding the diverse make-up of Britain and the world. It would be important that all teachers retain a balance of faith and non-faith perspective over time so that the highly inclusive ethos and context of the school continues.
- Pupils felt safe and confident to communicate their own experiences within their lessons

and with visitors. It was evident that pupils could recognise their discreet RE learning and gave their own examples of work they felt proud of in RE. This demonstrated both discreet RE cycles of enquiry as well as wider religious and cultural literacy

- Interviews with pupils indicated that they all enjoyed their RE lessons and felt valued when used very effectively as 'Experts' in their own faith whilst also considering others opinions and thoughts. It was interesting to note that there was widespread acceptance that within a faith there could be differences e.g. within the Muslim pupils some follow the Saudi calendar while others follow the Pakistani calendar and that was "fine" with both groups. Likewise there is an acceptance that within the Christian faith there are differences between denominational groups. All, from Y2 – Y6 enjoyed sharing their experiences in RE, learning about each others religions and practices and felt valued as their experiences and knowledge was valued and that they felt safe to share in an open and accepting learning environment.
- Questioning by teachers gave space for pupils to consider and think prior to answering or asking a question themselves. This enabled questions encouraging children to think critically to develop through the class discussions seen.
- Assessment of RE will strengthen with the focus planned over this year that will embed the skills based approach with Age Related Expectations in RE
- Requests to withdraw are rare and they are managed by the head teacher through communication with parents

Evidence Base may include:

- **Joint lesson observations, performance information, discussions, work scrutiny and document scrutiny**