



Quality Mark for Early Years

Initial Visit Report		Date	18th April 2016
Quality Mark Awarded		Yes	
School	Unsworth Community School	Number children and age range:	33 Reception age
Assessor 1	Claire Shivnan-Taylor	Assessor 2	Wendy Jackson
Evidence against the 10 elements			
Element 1	A whole setting strategy and planning to improve young children’s abilities and achievements in their foundation skills		
Evidence	<p>The whole school improvement plan includes targets for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and there is a clear commitment to the development of basic skills. There is an annual report to governors which reports on the progress of identified groups.</p> <p>School has analysed the data and identified the need to explore the gender gap in performance and, as a result, action has been taken to encourage girls to use the construction area. Most pupils made at least expected progress in Literacy and mathematics across the Reception year in relation to the on entry to Reception data.</p>		
Element 2	An analysis of the assessment of young children’s abilities and achievements		
Evidence	<p>Initial assessments are carried out informed by visits to settings/ home before arrival including asking parents their views. The Parent Support Adviser is involved in home visits and in Nursery visits to gather the views of parents and of the key workers in the Nursery settings. This significant investment in transition arrangements helps to build relationships. Children attend either morning or afternoon sessions at the start to help them settle in. The initial focus is on children’s personal, social and emotional development. A baseline on entry is completed through observations and progress is tracked using processes aligned with the whole school approach to assessment. Evidence of children’s achievements is in both the learning journeys and in writing journals.</p>		
Element 3	Setting appropriately high expectations for young children’s development		
Evidence	<p>Assessment evidence is used to plan learning opportunities. Weekly observations focus on a specific group of children ensuring that all children are considered over time. There is an emphasis on using children’s ideas and interests to shape provision and to encourage children to access the different areas of provision. Outdoor provision includes opportunities for children to write and this was seen being accessed by children independently. Children have access to the outdoors throughout the day and during lunchtimes.</p> <p>All children access sessions on phonics, literacy and mathematics; the literacy session includes shared reading and guided writing. Work scrutiny across the primary age range always includes the Reception writing journals.</p> <p>The percentage of pupils reaching a good level of development is above the national average over time.</p>		

Element 4	Planning 'next steps' in learning for young children's development
Evidence	Observations relating to what children can do are recorded and inform next steps. All adults in the setting contribute to observation evidence however judgements are made by the EYFS practitioner including next steps in learning. Learning conversations are held with pupils, and within the EYFS team, to decide as to whether consolidation is needed or additional challenge. Planning focuses on group rather than whole class teaching. Learning intentions are within the areas in addition to being used in group tasks. Robust transition arrangements are in place for entry into Reception and for moving into Year 1.
Element 5	Regular review of the progress made by all young children
Evidence	Summative assessments are based on observations during focused tasks, on-going observations/ annotations, samples of work and learning conversations with the children. Innovative use is made of IT to record children's learning in a variety of ways. The EYFS includes children with speech and language difficulties as Unsworth Community Primary School has a specialised provision for this learning need. An additional teacher works in Reception in the mornings to support these children working in partnership with the EYFS practitioner to ensure provision meets their needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that any additional support/ interventions are documented and tracked through the provision map. Learning plans are in place for children with identified additional needs. Assessment is reviewed against prime and specific areas of learning; assessment grids highlight gaps in learning. Writing is moderated termly. The EYFS practitioner meets termly with a colleague from another school to moderate judgements. The progress of Reception children, individuals and groups, is discussed at termly pupil progress meetings with outcomes informing planning. School uses trajectory planning to plan children's learning paths and reviews this termly.
Element 6	A commitment to improving the skills of all practitioners
Evidence	In 2015/16 teaching assistants are undertaking professional reading as part of a case study linked to marking and feedback. Teachers have been given a copy of 'Teaching Backwards' as their professional reading for the year. School has a training room for staff to use to develop their practice. The EYFS practitioner accesses training through Early Excellence and the Bury Primary Learning Collaborative. School runs a number of professional development programmes in-house. Recent whole school professional activity days have focused on the use of Numicon and the use of iPADS to promote teaching and learning.
Element 7	A balanced use of child-initiated and adult-led, play-based activities
Evidence	Tasks within the provision are planned to ensure that there is a balance of child and adult initiated learning activities. Provision is matched to learning through reference to assessment grids and 'Development Matters'. There is an annual theme map which is adapted in line with the interests of each Reception cohort.
Element 8	The use of appropriate environments and resources
Evidence	There is a dedicated annual EYFS budget which is used to replace or buy new resources. The environment is organised and annotated to promote children's independence. Children have routines and are confident in making choices both indoors and outdoors. iPads are used by children in a range of different ways including to develop speaking & listening skills and for guided reading.

Element 9	Partnership working between families, carers, practitioners and professionals in supporting young children's learning and development
Evidence	<p>Parents are invited into school for activity afternoons and they are asked to take notes. Parents record significant learning at home in speech bubbles and these are included in the learning journeys.</p> <p>Drop-in sessions are held twice a year for parents to discuss children's progress.</p> <p>Parents spoken to referenced that the setting is open and welcoming <i>"they know my child"</i>.</p> <p>There has been a phonic development session for parents with materials to take away so that parents can reinforce the teaching methods at home; the school website has phonics games that can be used. Parents spoken to said that they find the website useful in helping them know what and how their children are learning e.g. the weekly blog, tweets, and newsletters.</p> <p>Parents can access the school diary and can drop in to speech and language sessions.</p> <p>Parents of children with additional needs input into the review meetings.</p>
Element 10	An effective procedure for monitoring planning and assessing improvement in practice and provision
Evidence	Standards across the school were externally validated through a Peer Review in February 2016. Progress against the school development plan is reviewed termly. Governors gather first-hand evidence of the school's work through learning walks enabling them to check findings against the school's self-evaluation. The Headteacher, leadership team and curriculum task teams monitor provision through learning walks and other activity.
Key Strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transition arrangements 2. Parents as partners in learning 3. Organisation of continuous provision 4. Knowledge of the children including the early identification of children who need additional support 5. The innovative use of IT in supporting learning
Point to consider	Consider expanding the observation evidence in the learning journeys to include more examples from child-initiated play in relation to the characteristics of effective learning e.g. critical thinking.