

Torfield And Saxon Mount Academy Trust



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Torfield and Saxon Mount Schools External Advisor Annual Report Summary 2016/17

The External Advisor review visits this year have been completed across both schools in the MAT.

The review and assessment of performance this year have delivered opportunities to “observe, explore and discuss” with the executive headteacher and the heads of school.

The curriculum planning and delivery of teaching and learning are fundamentally important and reflect the “core purpose” of the schools; it is the environment in which they operate that underpins the impressions that visitors get. Every visit to either school is framed by that first impression. For my own part the schools never cease to impress. The atmosphere is friendly calm and purposeful. Greetings from staff and pupils are warm and genuine. The impact of this is the development of the culture of the MAT and in my opinion that culture is exceptional.

Over the last year I have, at different times, with the senior leadership team and with trustee representatives reviewed: end of year outcomes / overall effectiveness, the quality of teaching and learning, leadership and management and behaviour and welfare.

Outcomes data for both schools has to be examined rigorously. This is not because there is a concern but rather because the schools are utterly determined to ensure that comparisons of data are provided between the schools and a wide selection of external sources. The schools go to great lengths to ensure that they are compared against the full national profile for all pupils as well as against data for special schools. This is a tough strategy but one that ensures that any “easy option” is not used to create an overly generous view of the school’s outcomes and that a “tough option” is not used to merely demonstrate some greater level of disadvantage in the two schools. The middle path allows a serious and extremely rigorous analysis of outcomes using as often as is possible the same tools and comparators that all schools are required to use, whether “special” or “mainstream”.

At Saxon Mount – 2016 analysis of outcomes

In literacy and maths 100% of pupils both disadvantaged and Not Disadvantaged have made expected progress, 83% in 2014

Attendance has increased year on year and stands at 95.2% 2015-16

Unauthorised and persistent absence remains low

Attendance compares very favourably against local secondary schools and very well against special schools and is consistently close to national secondary school attendance levels, despite small and variable cohorts.

At Torfield – 2016 analysis of outcomes

Analysis of data indicates pupils have made very good progress in reading and are in line with the national expected level.

In maths and writing the progress is significantly below national expectations, all scores include one pupil arriving mid key stage with unsubstantiated prior data.

Calculations minus this pupil indicate scores in all areas are not significantly different from

national expected levels for all pupils (including Non-SEND pupils). Further analysis of disadvantaged pupils indicates they did better than those not disadvantaged.

Attendance overall – 94.3% (high)

4.9% authorised absence

0.8% unauthorised;

These are two extracts of reports sent to trustees but demonstrate how the judgements are made against all appropriate national data sets and that the schools continue to deliver exceptionally impressive outcomes.

Lesson Observations

Joint lesson observations are conducted to ensure that judgements in school are triangulated and externally evaluated. On every occasion at both schools the judgements were in line.

From that review criteria and analysis trustees can be confident that the lesson observations and judgements are accurately scrutinised and agreed.

In summary

Policy and practice in core areas is regularly assessed across both schools.

Hard questions are asked of the SLT by the trustees present, the Executive Headteacher and me. The thrust of the process is to create a conversation and discussion around the key areas of the academy operation, to test and triangulate the academy judgements and agree areas for development. Governance is highly effective not only in the key role of holding the leadership teams to account for the performance of each school, but in the balance of skills and strength of knowledge displayed; this is a board who uses strong and positive relationships to ensure the leadership team are empowered to succeed and innovate.

This has been another excellent year for the academy. The exceptional atmosphere created in the schools is thoughtful, purposeful, happy and productive. Children present complex needs; these are respected and define the individuality of the learning environment. Learning in the academy is not a passive process but one actively structured and delivered by a gifted leadership and excellent, committed teachers who, day by day, and through their efforts, empower pupils to have a successful, creative and active role in the world.

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