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St Mary's CE Primary School Ramsbottom

Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark Accreditation Visit

St Mary's CE Primary School, Ramsbottom

13th July 2023

St Mary's CE Primary School has been part of a small group of schools in Bury working towards the Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark (DAQM) over the last five years. They have attended centrally based cluster meetings and other CPD events sharing practice with their colleagues and developing their own school vision. The project has been led by the SENCO Claire Clark under the direction of the head teacher, Geraldine Woodward.

St Mary's is a small rural school on the edge of Bury. A place where staff and pupils flourish in a positive Christian Ethos. The school motto is Believe and Achieve Together and this evident in the way all children are valued and recognised for their uniqueness and the contribution they make to the St Mary's family.

What is distinctive about the way school meets the needs of all dyslexia learners or those at risk from dyslexia?

St Mary's is distinctive in the way it addresses the needs of all its learners, positively and inclusively encompassing the needs of SEND children, including those with dyslexia and those pupils with dyslexic type difficulties. Pupil voice is a unique strength of the school. The school council, the faith team, the online safety champions all contribute and ensure that they represent the whole learning community.

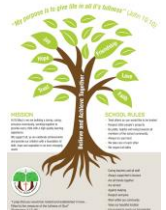
The distinctive Christian Ethos is woven through everything within the school. The nurturing approach the school brings to every child with additional needs is very clear with the SENCO taking an active role to ensure that early identification conversations with staff and parent happens swiftly and strategies are implemented and monitored.

The development of dyslexia awareness across school has been a key element of the School Improvement Plan throughout their journey and will remain so as developments continue, with the progress so far being further embedded in everyday practice.

School have worked in line with a DAQM Action Plan which has systematically set out the process which led school to this accreditation visit. Resources have been allocated to the project and team members, have been committed to developing dyslexia aware practice.

How does school address dyslexic learners' personal attitudes, values and personal development?

A great deal of emphasis is placed on all pupils' and staffs mental health, wellbeing and emotional development. Emotion cups are used in school where children are encouraged to silently assess their own emotion as they come in (they place a lolly stick with their name on in a cup showing one of five emotions), adults will acknowledge these and choose an appropriate time to speak privately with children



to discuss worries and concerns. In a small school space is limited- accreditors **Particularly liked** interactive prayer area in one class that has a dual purpose as a wellbeing space , that can be a timeout area for calming, or for regulating after sensory overload (sensory toys available), for praying and writing and displaying prayers as well as a quiet , non-distracting area to work in.

Spirituality is an important aspect of school. Reflection areas can be found in every classroom where children can ponder and reflect or pray. These are managed by the faith squad, as is the Sacred Space in the playground, giving children who need it a place to be quiet. Children are nurtured in a closeknit Christian family which places the child at the heart of everything that they do. 'The school community is inclusive and is like a family where no-one is isolated, and everyone belongs.'

Opportunities for pupils to evaluate and reflect on aspects of learning, including whole school worship are common practice. Celebration displays in the halls celebrate achievements in and outside school and emphasise the unique talents of their children . This includes neurodiversity.

How effective is teaching and learning for dyslexic learners and those at risk from dyslexia?

Communication is strong feature of the school due to the nature and size of the school. The teaching staff and support staff regularly share ideas and strategies to meet need. The support staff are updated quickly and respond swiftly to changes and embrace training and new initiatives. The staff are consistent in the approaches to teaching all children with dyslexia and dyslexia type difficulties through early identification but also through the consistent approaches to the displays within their classrooms such as clocks with Numicon, alphabet arcs, and visual timetables,

School carries out their own monitoring to identify pupils with special educational needs including those presenting with dyslexic type tendencies. These monitoring procedures are used to set targets and to organise special educational provision. School work with parents and mutually agree ways forward for pupils who may need formal diagnosis. The SENCO works with the parents and the whole staff to ensure that adaptive resources and teaching strategies are introduced for the learner and for other members of the class who may have dyslexic type tendencies or other identified needs.

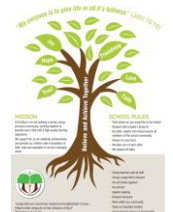
Adaptations such as pastel backgrounds on the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) are used in each class. Word mats, vocabulary mats, spelling bags, concrete maths apparatus are found in every classroom and are easily accessible.

What is the quality of the curriculum received by dyslexic learners?

Staff have regular slots at staff meetings to try out new strategies and adapt their teaching to suit the learners. High quality first teaching is enhanced through working walls for Maths and English. The teaching of subject specific curriculum is taught through careful curriculum design which ensures that the right tier of vocabulary is taught at the right age and stage. Knowledge organisers are used in every subject.

Little Wandle phonics has now been embedded throughout and is having impact with pupils in year 1 achieving above the expected standard in the phonics screener. The pupils have daily phonics sessions and pupil that may need is given interventions and booster activities to support their phonic acquisition.

Planning takes account of the needs of different groups of pupils those learners with literacy difficulties. Planning acknowledges a range of teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the subject and where necessary, accounts for individual as well as group needs. The curriculum is delivered in an engaging, practical, and



multisensory way with alternative methods being explored as part of the planning for writing process. Music, images, and videos are used as part of the writing process. 100% of year 6 achieved the expected standard. 6 pupils achieved greater depth in writing at the end of KS2 this year with over 82% at the expected standard in R/W/M combined. Two of that cohort have been tested for Irlen's syndrome and both wear appropriate tinted glasses.

As a small staff- staff are open to sharing ideas, looking at each other's classrooms, discussing successful strategies Staff mental health- all staff meet together at lunch and sit in the hall at break downs- all look out for each other, are aware of each other's needs

How well does school ensure equality of access and opportunity for dyslexic learners or those at risk from dyslexia?

School sees that dyslexia aware practices are an aid to ensure that the learning experience is inclusive for all and allow equal access with opportunities to explore activities and learning presented in ways to encourage them all to reach their potential.

Homework policies and practices have changed to reflect meeting the needs of all learners and parental support and input. Each term there is a topic that pupils can choose to make create a single item for. This could take any form and is meant to be completed without any time restrictions or expectations of format.

Maths stations used effectively for all pupils. English support resources are available to all. Sensory spelling and spelling bag activities are used in some classrooms and this practise is being developed in other classrooms.

32 chrome books have been purchased by school and are used within KS 2 as part of Alternative Methods of Recording (AMR) and to access Apps such as CALL Scotland. Purple Mash is used throughout. QR codes have been introduced across the school with staff and members of year 6 reading stories which can then be accessed by younger pupils.

Audio comprehension has been carefully planned prepared and administered by class teachers for pupils who have difficulty accessing challenging reading texts especially at year 5 and year 6. This is a very successful model for the school and the class teacher is very positive about the impact this has had on her learners and continues to implement this as part of he practices.

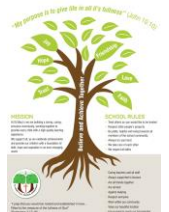
Displays are carefully thought through by staff and what purpose they serve for the learner, but especially those children who may have difficulties accessing them. Words on displays have been reduced.

Pupils have access to Alternative Methods of recording (AMR) and are allowed to choose the way they choose to record. They explore their learning through multisensory approaches and are often immersed into writing through images, listening.

Floor books are used widely to record learning and learning experiences in all subject areas. These are full of examples of cooperative learning, where children have collaborated and shared ideas using AMR.

Bespoke packages are provided for those children who struggle to access fully access the curriculum e.g., a member of lunchtime staff volunteers regularly to work with one child to create models which are related to the current theme or topic within his class.

How well does school, work in partnership with parents, other schools and other members of the community to meet the needs of dyslexic learners and those at risk from dyslexia?



Regular attendance by the SENCO at the local network meetings has insured that staff are kept abreast to the developments of dyslexia aware strategies. Visiting different DAQM schools has given the SENCO a flavour of what can be done to strengthen inclusive practice in every area of the school.

Class Dojo is used to communicate with parents. Dojo was introduced before the pandemic and is used consistently to communicate with parents, this includes pupils who access interventions share their work with their parents through Dojo. SEND parents are met with on a regular basis. They are well supported by the SENCO who has developed positive relationships with them. The needs of their child are discussed, and parents can ask questions.

Little Wandle phonics resources are available on the school website for parents to access at home this includes ways to support their child with read in the home.

The school website outlines SEND and inclusive learning opportunities. It also displays hyperlinks to other useful websites and services which parents can access. This includes links to NHS services for mental health and well-being.

The school website has recently been redesigned. It easy to navigate and has lots of areas which are helpful to parents. It also has quick links to relevant policies and where areas of the curriculum cross over. All of the SEND information is clear and so are the hyperlinks to additional resources. Including resources which may help learners with dyslexia or dyslexic type difficulties.

Heightened transition visits are arranged through the SENCO for pupils with additional needs when the learner is given opportunities to visit on several occasions explore different areas of the school, meet staff and meet up with other learners from different school. The SENCO ensures that transition information is shared in person as well as ensuring that all files are transferred in readiness for the Autumn term.

How well is the school regarded by the dyslexic learners and their parents?

The children appreciate the support they have been given. The parents are very positive about the school and its approach to all children with additional needs including those diagnosed with dyslexia or dyslexic type tendencies.

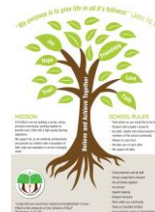
Parents described regular meetings with school staff including regular parents' evenings, as well as welcome meetings at the start of each new school year. Parents also acknowledged that school were approachable, and they could discuss their child's need at any time. Parents also report that any concerns they have are responded to swiftly.

The parents would unreservedly recommend the school to other parents. One of the parents interviewed was a parent who had been encouraged by other parents to transfer her child to the school because of the quality of SEND provision. The parent was overwhelmed by how swiftly the school responded to concerns and addressed the needs of her child.

In what ways does school's Dyslexia Aware good practice impact on the learning of other pupils?

Inclusive Quality first teaching can be seen throughout, allowing all learners to have equal access to a varied curriculum.

School reported that as a result of improvements in dyslexia awareness across school, all pupils had more individual choice in learning, for example, choosing how they would record their learning, and independently deciding and using the supporting resources they need which in turn had improved participation and had secured better inclusion for all learners.



School felt that the consistent approach to teaching and learning resulting from becoming dyslexia aware had impacted greatly on standards. They felt that consistency came through use of a common language for learning as well as through sharing the same approaches to teaching and learning.

What is working exceptionally well?

- Maths stations are accessible and well used in each classroom.
- Reflective opportunities and well-being are a positive strength as they recognise that all children need time and space to explore their feelings. Children's mental health is a priority.
- Floor books are of exceptional quality and capture learning creatively in many areas of the curriculum.
- Pupil voice is strong and is visible throughout school.
- Effective and adaptable deployment of resources with minimal impact on a small school budget.

What might school consider in moving forward?

1. Strengthen parental understanding of dyslexia and neuro diversity through exploring recognition of role models in society and within the local community.
2. Evaluate how best to make Literacy zones accessibility and visible in each classroom.
3. Succession planning. Explore opportunities to build a team of dyslexia champions within the staff who can lead DAQM forward.
4. Develop the use of clocks on display within the classroom to reflect the age and stage of the children and increase the language and labelling used.
5. Ensure that the vocabulary used within the classroom is displayed and accessible for everyone in line with knowledge builders and vocabulary tiers.

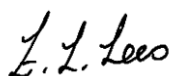
What the school feels it should do next?

- A. Develop SALAD (speaking and listening days) and no pens Wednesday to promote speaking and listening, creativity, and strengthen AMR.
- B. Expand the use of QR codes into other classrooms especially for low attainers/ non-readers.
- C. Continue to update the school website.
- D. Expand the use of multisensory spelling activities to every class.

Dyslexia Aware Consortium members conducting the accreditation:

Emma Lees & Ellie Lorenzo - Bury, Jane Angus - Salford

Date: 14th July 2023



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