



**North Tyneside Council**

# Summer SDP Visit Report

**School/Setting:** Silverdale School (7007)

**LA:** North Tyneside

**Date:** 07/06/2023, 09:00

**Adviser:** Gina White

**Term:** Summer : 17/04/2023 - 21/07/2023

**Focus:** Summer SDP Visit

**Headteacher/Manager:** Peter Gannon

**Attendees:**

**Latest Ofsted Grade:** Good

**LA Category:** SLA Level 1

# Summary of Visit

During the 2022 / 2023 academic year three School Development Partner visits took place. Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, leaders of subjects and with pupils. Joint visits to lessons and reviews of pupils work were undertaken and the school's work to keep pupils safe was scrutinised. During the summer visit meetings were held with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher. A joint Key Stage 3 book check and discussion was undertaken with the Deputy and Assistant headteachers.

## Curriculum

- During the year the schools work to support pupils with difficulties in reading and writing has helped to accelerate their learning and progress. In the Spring term visit, a focus on the work of pupils in Years 6, 7 and 8, and discussion with them about their progress in reading and writing, found that they were making significant gains in reading fluently with understanding and confidence. Handwriting sessions had enabled some pupils to master the skills of forming letters and words and writing in sentences. Pupils were proud of the progress they were making to improve the legibility of their writing.
- In the summer term visit the focus extended to look at the broader opportunities for Key Stage 3 pupils to apply and develop their reading and writing skills across the curriculum. In a joint activity with senior leaders, a sample of pupils' English, science, PSHE and careers education books were reviewed. It was clear that more opportunities for extended writing were developing, particularly in English and science. In both subjects focused questions and inventive opportunities to write for different purposes encouraged pupils to use the information they had learned and organise it to complete a written task. Opportunities for reading and comprehension were noted in PSHE books but writing was much more limited by worksheets.
- For some pupils the formation of letters and the legibility of their writing varied considerably. It was invariably stronger in English but less so in subjects that included a lot of specific terminology, unfamiliar terms or spellings. Some pupils were not able to demonstrate their knowledge clearly or complete all their written tasks.
- It would be helpful if the science subject team worked together to identify issues with vocabulary in certain topics and consider how to ensure that pupils understand and use them correctly. This could usefully promote even greater success in Key Stage 4 science courses.
- Marking and feedback to pupils varied considerably between Year 7 and Year 9 and within and between subjects. A focus in Year 9 on what the child has done well, what needs further work, and the next steps the child needs to take provided a very clear reminder following teacher / pupil discussion. This was in marked contrast to Year 7 pupil conversations that appeared more descriptive and unclear in explaining what worked well or next steps.
- PSHE books showed that attention is given to cyber bullying and Year 7 pupils are able to identify what to do in very clear steps including, not responding to messages, blocking the bully, and changing settings on phones, email, and social media accounts to prevent future attacks. Pupils are taught about 'fake news' and are aware of how to recognise suspicious and 'phishing' emails.

# Safeguarding

- Safeguarding remains a high priority for the school. All statutory checks and training are undertaken and pupils are taught about risks and how to stay safe. Safeguarding is regularly reviewed and updated during the year.
- The safeguarding team's support for pupils is enhanced by the notifications they receive from the local multi-agency safeguarding hub, and the alerts received from Operation Encompass about domestic violence incidents. The school has trained more than the two key adults they are required to so that children and young people receive swift support following incidents of domestic abuse.
- Some children have caring responsibilities for an adult or younger children at home. The school carries out statutory Young Carers assessments during Year 6. Very few children currently on role have such responsibilities and the school liaises with the named officer with responsibility for Young Carers in North Tyneside to discuss each individual's specific support needs. They receive support through the school's pastoral system and outside school have access to the Young Carers support group in North Tyneside.

# Leadership and management including governance

- The headteacher and governors have ensured that the school has moved forward during the year in implementing clearly focused development plans. They have helped to accelerate progress in almost all areas of the schools work. However, leaders know that further work is required to enable pupils to make more progress in reading and writing across the curriculum and to improve pupils attendance. The school's progress has been recognised in the recent Ofsted inspection.
- The senior leadership team have already begun to consider the actions they need to take to continue to develop and improve provision for pupils. A focus on re-establishing the travel training that was a strong feature of their work pre-Covid-19, and enabling pupils to develop more independence, was discussed during this meeting.
- The school has received details of pupils who will be joining the school in September and work to support their transition is well-developed.
- Work to maintain information security is firmly established. Protocols are in place to ensure that access to confidential information is protected. As part of the induction process staff receive training about their responsibilities, including the requirement to regularly reset passwords. Discussion with a new member of staff during this visit confirmed that they had read the policies and procedures on the school website, and understood why they were necessary. All staff have completed training about what to do in the event of a cyber-attack and the school subscribes to the local authority system.

# Behaviour and attendance including exclusions

- Behaviour has improved during the year and a much smaller number of pupils are involved in incidents compared to previous years. This progress is particularly noteworthy given the increase in the number of pupils on the school's role. The additional training and support for staff has underpinned the progress and has enabled them to respond consistently to the complexity and changing needs of pupils.
- Leaders analysis of data found that most behaviour incidents occur at unstructured times of the school day. Actions taken to introduce activities at break and lunchtimes have proved successful and provide more structure and focused opportunities for recreation and for pupils to play together using board games, computer games, sports, or playing Tag in the playground. Typically, interactions between staff and pupils are friendly and respectful and the school is calm.
- School attendance is improving in some parts of the school but overall is still below pre-pandemic levels. At the time of this visit school monitoring identified 64 pupils who have less than 90% attendance and who are defined as persistently absent, and 9 pupils who have attendance of 50% or less who are in the severely absent category.
- Inconsistency in attendance is a particular issue in Key Stage 4 and it would be helpful if leaders could make contact with a local school, or with a nearby school that is part of the DfE Attendance Hub initiative, to identify how they use strategies and support to help in tackling this difficult problem.