



Hill West Primary School

Pedagogical Newsletter – October 2018

Reading Eggs/press

Our children love the Reading Eggs / Eggspress on-line learning tool and benefit from using it at home as well as in school. More than 99% of Reading Eggs/press parents would recommend the site to their friends. In Reading Eggs (for KS1 children), there are 12 maps with 120 lessons and each lesson has between 6 to 10 parts. In Reading Eggspress (for KS2 children) there are 220 core comprehension lessons as well as a range of other resources including more than 200 spelling lessons and competitions where pupils can compete in real time against pupils from around the world, a library of levelled texts in excess of 2000 and quizzes and games galore. **We would encourage all parents to support their child to complete at least one lesson each week at home.** Our in-school reading analysis tells us that those children who complete lessons regularly do better on reading tests.



Issue 23
October 2018

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Reminders:

School closed to
children on Friday
26th October and
Monday 5th
November.

Does Hill West deal effectively with Bullying?

This year, as in previous years, we have been encouraging our parents to complete parentview which is an on-line questionnaire that enables parents to tell Ofsted what you think about our school. Many of you, our parents, find the question about whether we deal effectively with bullying difficult to answer and as such respond with 'don't know' (this currently stands at 31% of all respondents this academic year and was at 13% of respondents for the last academic year). Irrespective of whether your child has ever been bullied at school we, as leaders, feel that **everyone should know what we do to deal with bullying** effectively at school. In an attempt to address this we have started to issue a termly bullying newsletter. We obviously work hard with our children too through their personal development and well-being curriculum to equip them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to identify when bullying is happening and to talk to someone about it. We believe that all children have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and which is free

from harassment and bullying in any form. Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally. It is usually unprovoked, persistent and can continue for a long period of time. Bullying behaviour can include: physical aggression, verbal aggression, indirect social exclusion, cyber bullying. Bullying can be difficult to identify because it is often subtle, covert and rarely witnessed by adults. The role of our teachers in school is to: never ignore suspected bullying; never make assumptions about what is or isn't happening; to listen carefully to all accounts; to adopt a problem-solving approach with the children and families involved and to follow up shortly after intervention and sometime later to check the bullying has not resumed. **Teachers and leaders in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.** Teachers receive on-going professional training to enable them to deal with bullying. **If we become aware that your child has been bullied at school we will notify you at the earliest opportunity. Similarly if we believe that your child has bullied we will contact you directly.**





Ability Grouping

Glossary of Terms

Pedagogy – the craft of teaching

Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress – On-line reading lessons

Parent View – a questionnaire for parents to tell Ofsted about their child's school

MET Standard – standard at which children should be achieving at the end of the year

Pupil Premium – additional funding for publicly funded schools in England designed to help disadvantaged students



I was intrigued by an article in the Times Educational Supplement some months ago by Sam Hunter a Headteacher at Hilting Junior School in Hampshire. In her article she suggested we imagine a classroom where the “set” tables are labelled from “killer Whale” to “plankton”. She quickly went on to say that when teachers are asked to consider this very scenario they are inevitably horrified (as I imagine are we). However, Sam urged us to think about: is there really any difference between labelling children as “killer whales” and “plankton” as labelling them as “hexagons” and “circles”? For Sam the thought of telling children what they are capable of and what they are not capable of is morally wrong. She urged us to consider ‘what you tell the seventh child who can’t sit on the top table because there are only six chairs?’ ‘How do you prevent children from feeling pressure over maintaining their place in the room or raise the self-esteem of the child sitting in the “bottom” group?’ ‘Why should we tell each table of children what we believe they are capable of, giving them work we have already decided that they can do?’ Our learning should not be limited by our own expectations or those of others. Sam says “we don’t just avoid setting at our school, we even avoid the term “ability”: “current attainment” is so much more open-minded. Admittedly the move to mixed-attainment seating is not easy. It takes a great deal of forethought to get it right. It involves lesson structures that cater for all learners. For example children may only be involved in the whole-class introduction if they need to be, others may choose to opt out of this if they feel the content is something they can already do. For example, the teacher might share the type of calculation the class will be learning to solve in maths that day. If a child already feels confident with this, they have no need to listen to the explanation – they can proceed independently. Spontaneous carpet time may be a common feature of lessons as the teachers use effective assessment for learning strategies to change the direction of the learning in real time. If a group of children is showing they have nailed a concept, they can move to the carpet space, where a new piece of learning can be established to broaden their understanding or take them on to the next stage of thinking.

The Education Endowment Foundation’s Teaching and Learning Toolkit has looked for evidence on the impact of grouping pupils by attainment within classes. The findings suggest that on average, pupils experiencing setting or streaming make slightly less progress than pupils taught in mixed attainment classes. Setting and streaming it appears has a very small negative impact for low and mid-range attaining learners and a very small positive impact for higher attainment pupils. There are exceptions to this pattern of course, with some research studies demonstrating benefits for all learners across the attainment range. Overall the Endowment Foundation argues that because the effects are small it appears that setting or streaming is not an effective way to raise attainment for most pupils. We know that it has an impact on wider outcomes such as confidence, self-efficacy and belief in one’s own abilities with some studies from the broader evidence base have concluded that grouping pupils on the basis of attainment may have longer term negative effects on the attitudes and engagement of low attaining pupils especially.

At Hill West we want our children to believe that attainment is not fixed and that each and every one of us is able to learn and excel. We do not want children to be labelled as a low ability child. This label can often live with them for the duration of their time in school and surely this cannot be right. Teaching mixed ability classes is not easy. It needs highly sophisticated teachers who are able to use flexible approaches to teaching. It means our pupils need to own their learning and to decide on the knowledge and skills that they have mastered and therefore do not need additional instruction on and conversely the knowledge and skills they haven’t mastered and need more teacher input with. We want our grouping arrangements to be flexible and responsive not just to the children but to the subject matter being taught at any given time.



SAFEGUARDING – FGM

FGM consists of all procedures involving partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. This is illegal in the UK under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Approximately 103,000 women aged 15-49, who have migrated to the UK, are living with the consequences of FGM. FGM is practiced for a variety of complex reasons. It is often carried out as result of the belief that it is essential for a girl to become a proper woman, and be marriageable; it is not required by any religion. FGM is classed as a form of child abuse and violence. The removal of, or damage to healthy, normal genital tissue interferes with the natural functioning of the body and can cause several immediate and long-term health consequences, both physically and psychologically. Under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, it is against the law, other than in excepted circumstances, to carry out the following actions in England and Wales: Perform FGM (section 1 of the Act); Assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself (section 2 of the Act); Assist a non-UK national or UK resident to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or UK resident (section 3 of the Act) Any person found guilty of an offence under section 1, 2 or 3 of the 2003 Act is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment or a fine (or both).

Whilst all staff in school should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers. **If a teacher during the course of their work discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher MUST report this to the police.**

Pupil Outcomes

The attainment and achievement of our pupils is the singular most important aspect of our work. Leaders and Governors have an uncompromising focus on the attainment and progress of all groups of learners across school. Throughout each year group and across the curriculum our pupils make substantial and sustained progress. Excellent assessment for learning informs teaching and ensures lessons are challenging and move learning on quickly so that children make good progress. High levels of involvement mean that 'learning is fun' and children enjoy coming to school. Children tell us that they know their own strengths and weaknesses and value their child friendly learning journeys.

Personal Development has an excellent foundation in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with 98% of pupils achieving Expected or better against the Personal, Social, Emotional Development strand of the Early Learning Goals (self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour and making relationships). Last year 98% of our pupils in EYFS made expected progress in reading, writing, number and shape with almost half of all pupils making better than expected progress from their starting points.

The proportions of pupils achieving the MET standard in the core subjects is significantly higher than national at all key phases. Phonics is taught highly effectively with 95% passing the check in Year 1 Summer 2017 and 93% at Summer 2018. Standardised test scores for Reading and Maths across school show a significant proportion of pupils exceeding scores of 110 (54%),

Our continued focus on improving and enhancing our teaching sees pupils excel in every key phase. Last Summer 82% of all pupils at KS2 achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths. This was 14.1% higher than the outstanding school average and 17.4% more than the national average. Progress measures were fantastic too at 1.17 for reading, 1.53 in Writing and 2.58 in Maths compared to 0 nationally.

We are extremely proud of these outcomes which are a testament to the continued hard work of pupils and the whole staff team.



Hill West Senior Leadership Team

Dr Clarke – Head Teacher

Mr Lackenby – Deputy Head teacher

Mrs Cook – Deputy Head Teacher and currently on maternity leave

Mrs George - Assistant Head Teacher for Reception and Year 1

Miss Bolton – Assistant Head Teacher for Years 2, 3 and 4

Dr Warrack – Assistant Head Teacher for Years 5 & 6

Pupil Premium

Ask any teacher why they got into teaching and almost all say that it was to give young people, whatever their background and wherever they come from, the best possible start in life. Yet, across England, the poorest students are still much less likely than their classmates to leave school with the qualifications they need. Closing the attainment gap is a significant challenge. Pupil premium funding for schools was introduced seven years ago acknowledging the historical relationship between family income and educational success and providing resources in school to help address it. The pupil premium has increased schools' focus on closing the gap. The National Audit Office surveyed school leaders and 57% of them said they provided specific support for disadvantaged students before it was introduced and this rose to 94% afterwards. It is likely that the attainment gap has narrowed since 2011 by almost 11% in primary schools and 8% in secondary schools. This progress is slower than many of us would like, but it is progress. The pupil premium funding needs to make the biggest possible difference in young people's lives. Quite simply it needs to ensure that there is more good teaching for all pupils, especially the disadvantaged. It must fund high-quality training to improve teaching. More should be done to encourage schools to share successful strategies too. This is something our MAT does highly effectively. By increasing the level and quality of school-to-school support, systems become consistently excellent across all schools. Seven years after the introduction of the premium, the moral and educational case for giving additional support to underprivileged children remains as strong as ever.

