

Parents Forum – The March C of E School – March 2015

Date – 10.03.2015

Topic – Curriculum & Assessment

Attendees

Chair – Mr Jackson (Deputy Head)

Headmaster – Mr Edgington (Topic Leader)

Governor Attendee – Mr John Proctor

Parent Governor Attendees – Mr Ian Draper Harmer, Mr Ashley Hatton

Further attendees – parent attendees

Minutes – Gael Emmett

Please note – the following websites are available for further reading on topics included in the presentation

www.cornerstoneseducation.co.uk – Curriculum set for the March School

www.workingwithothers.org – Working with Others – there will be a training day on this for the teachers on the inset day 14th April 2015.

Mr Edgington led the forum with a presentation, as follows

‘Pupils are very positive about learning and respond enthusiastically to the stimulating curriculum.’

‘The curriculum includes highly appealing topics and challenging outdoor activities. Effective use is made of the school’s spacious grounds and rural location. A wide range of extra-curricular activities adds greatly to pupils’ enjoyment of school.’

‘In the Early Years the curriculum includes highly appealing topics and challenging outdoor activities. Effective use is made of the school’s spacious grounds and rural location. A wide range of extra-curricular activities adds greatly to pupils’ enjoyment of school.’

Ofsted Report October 2014

The National curriculum

This is a statutory document, first launched in 1987, which outlines the subjects and content that all maintained schools, (i.e. academies and free schools are exempt), must teach. It has been changed several times since its launch and the latest version was launched in September 2014. The main changes are as follows:

- In Maths, children will be expected to learn more at an earlier age - for example to know their 12 times table by the age of nine
- History will take a more chronological approach than under the old curriculum
- In English, pupils will learn more Shakespeare and there will be more importance placed on spelling
- The new Computing curriculum will require pupils to learn how to write code
- In Science, there will be a shift towards hard facts and "scientific knowledge"

The Creative curriculum

We recognise that children learn best when they see links between learning. For example, if they are studying the Tudors in History and how to write newspaper reports in English, it makes sense to write a newspaper report about the Mary Rose or the Spanish Armada.

After much research The March, St Richard’s and Boxgrove primary schools have purchased the **Cornerstones** Curriculum. This curriculum includes:

- a whole school learning philosophy that engages children and raises standards
- a wide range of cross-curricular activities tied to theme and subjects
- comprehensive coverage of the new national curriculum programmes of study
- Essential Skills for all subjects to help plan and assess children’s progress
- writing, spoken language and reading at the heart of all learning.

Each half termly project begins with a **stunning start** to hook the children into learning and ends with a **fantastic finish** to celebrate what has been achieved and share work with parents.

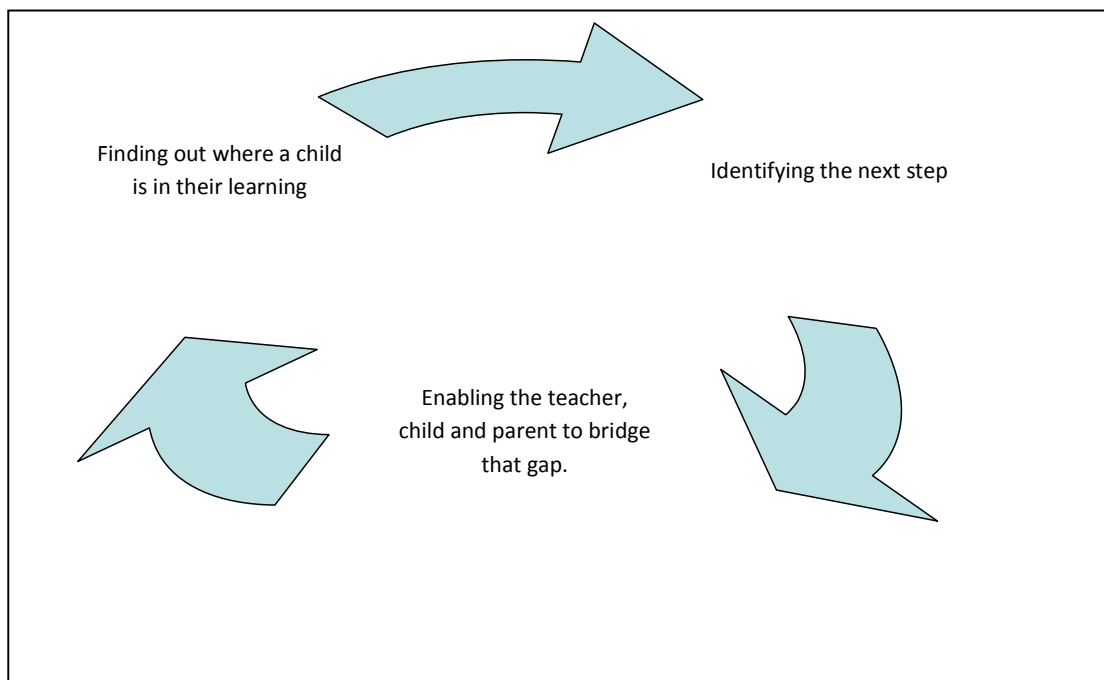
Assessment

Assessment is the process whereby information is gathered about each pupil's level of attainment and progress over time. This could be ongoing, (formative), or based on a test or collection of work, (summative).

For over twenty years we have used attainment **levels** to measure rates of progress and attainment in school. Following a government review, levels have now been rejected. The government has now given each individual school the responsibility to devise its own set of assessment criteria. At The March we are considering a published scheme called **Learning Ladders** as well as a locality system which may become common throughout the Chichester district.

The Government's preferred assessment criteria is against 'End of Year Expectations' (see attached). It is likely that children's attainment will be reported on at the end of each year using the phrases 'on track to meet' or 'met' expectations. The government have announced that in 2016 they would like a minimum of 85% of pupils to meet their end of year expectations.

We have defined the purpose of assessment as:



Summative Assessment

- Once per term for foundation subjects
- Ongoing APP, (assessing pupil progress), assessment based around 5 children for Reading writing and maths
- Reading writing and maths Moderation during first 10 minutes of Wednesday afternoon staff meetings

- School participates in West Sussex APP Moderation events for Reading, Writing and Maths (annually)
- Science moderation once per half term during Wednesday morning staff meetings
- Teacher Assessments are added to progress catcher 4 times per year: October, February, May and July.
- In Year 2 and Year 6 there are formal 'Sats' tests in May. Year 6 Reading, Maths and spelling punctuation and grammar tests are marked externally.
- In Years 3, 4 and 5 children take NFER assessment tests in reading and maths. This is to ensure that children are used to the format and that teacher assessment is in line with national expectations.

Formative Assessment

We use Assessment for Learning. Teachers pick-up misconceptions during lessons and use mini-plenaries to bring children back on track or to try a new approach. This may take the form of 'tag teaching' where one group works with the teacher or teaching assistant at different times during the lesson.

All work must be peer or self-assessed against the WILF. Children are asked to colour code their work at the end of every lesson in the following way:

- Green: I understand what I have learned completely and am ready to move on;
- Amber: I am almost there but need more practice to be fully confident;
- Red: I do not understand and need adult help. ***These children are often given the opportunity to stay behind at the end of the lesson to receive additional help.***

Marking and Feedback

The point of marking is twofold – to inform children of their next steps and to inform the teacher of how to adjust their planning to reflect the needs of the children.

- Each piece of work is marked either by the teacher or teaching assistant.
- Focussed marking happens at least once per week for every child in English and Maths.
- Time is set aside when possible for children to respond to comments and small tasks set for the start of the following lesson to check understanding.
- TAPOW marking (Teaching at point of writing) is also regular. This is an 'on the spot' intervention to move children's learning forward and should be in **written form**.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants used highlighter markers 'green for good' and 'think pink' to highlight areas of good work to be encouraged or areas where children need to improve. These pink areas could develop into targets.

Target setting

Targets are set to show children the next step to take in his or her learning. Each child in Years 1-6 must have a number based target in maths and a spelling, punctuation and grammar target in English. These targets will be generic across different genres in English and across different areas of Maths. The targets must be at an appropriate level and phrased in words the child can easily understand. During weekly focussed marking the target should be referred to in written feedback. If achieved, a new target should be set. Target sheets may be in the form of steps on learning ladders.

Reports

End of school year progress reports are written about each pupil in accordance with statutory requirements. Should parents wish to discuss any issues arising from their child's annual report they can book an appointment with their child's class teacher. Parental response sheets will also be given out with the reports to afford parents the opportunity to feedback on their children's progress.

Informal meetings during the year are often beneficial to the child and members of staff alike, parents are often more relaxed on these occasions. All teachers are available in the playground after school during the week. Parents appreciate early communication whenever there is a concern about a child's behaviour or progress. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to attend termly reviews of their child's progress with the SENDCO.

NEXT MEETING – 28.04.2015

TOPIC – **School Improvement Plan**

FUTURE TOPIC – Christian Ethos at the March C of E (Date TBC)