

JEK EDUCATION CONSULTANCY LTD

Forward Together

Due Diligence Visit Summer Term 2018

- Bainbridge CE Primary and Nursery School
- Askrigg VC Primary School
- West Burton CE Primary School

School:	The BAWB Federation
Date of planned	5th June 2018

Headteacher:	Maxine Price/Eleanor Harrison
Due Diligence Adviser:	James Kilner

Status:	CONFIDENTIAL to the senior leadership team and governors
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This review was commissioned by the Acting Co-Executive Headteachers and the board of governors for the BAWB Federation.

The independent reviewer, James Kilner, fulfilled this role in his capacity as an independent educational adviser and in no other capacity than this. The views, opinions and recommendations given here are entirely those of James Kilner and not of any third party.

The terms of reference were to give an independent overview of;

- the curriculum offer across the Federation in respect of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities as well as the personal, social and health education aspects
- the opportunities afforded by the early years foundation stage curriculum in the settings and the potential to harness the opportunities to ensure that all children met or exceeded their good level of development
- the structure and effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Federation and in the individual schools
- the potential to maximise educational opportunities for the pupils through focused, collaborative working together across the Federation.

Structure of the review

- Meeting with the headteachers and colleagues over the morning and afternoon in each of the three schools.
- Longer observations in the two early years settings
- Scrutiny of displayed work, particularly that relating to British Values, SMSC and PSHE
- Scrutiny of some of the curriculum documentation including the SMSC curriculum document for the BAWB Federation

The SMSC/PSHE curriculum and British Values

The Department for Education November 2014 published guidance on promoting British values in schools to ensure young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain.

The aim is to help both independent and state-maintained schools understand their responsibilities in this area.

All schools have a duty to 'actively promote' the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values were first set out by the government in the 'Prevent' strategy in 2011.

Until now schools have been required to 'respect' these values', but as a result of changes brought in in 2014 schools must now have a clear strategy for embedding these values and show how their work with pupils has been effective in doing so.

In the BAWB Federation there is a clear link between the need to embed these values through the PSHE and SMSC curriculum. Not only is this seen in the individual school but importantly the opportunities provided by the 'BAWB days' where pupils from across the Federation are able to work together on collaborative projects which incorporate key elements of the wider curriculum offer in foundation subjects.

The Federation's SMSC curriculum document states that 'Within the BAWB Federation, we want to provide possibilities to open up the world to our pupils.....the following curriculum drivers to enable our pupils to enhance their learning and their broader experiences in school: 1. Community and Collaboration 2. Creativity 3. Sustainability and Enterprise 4. Faith and Diversity'

It would seem that the more opportunities there are for pupils from the three communities to come together in a collaborative, working environment the greater the potential for them to gain a fuller understanding of their own communities and begin that journey together on the greater understanding of the wider world 'beyond the Dale.'

In the guidance published on British Values in 2014 Lord Nash said:

A key part of our plan for education is to ensure children become valuable and fully rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background.

We want every school to promote the basic British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

Examples of the understanding and knowledge pupils are expected to learn include:

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- an understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law
- an acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination

Across the Federation there are example of the type of actions schools are taking to promote British values. For example, teachers sensibly include in suitable parts of the curriculum - as appropriate for the age of pupils - material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries.

Despite the small numbers the schools seek to ensure all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened in order to demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes.

Summary

It would seem that the BAWB Federation is strategically placed to maximise the meaningful opportunities for pupils to interact with their peers in order to debate, understand, value and

ultimately make sense of the views and beliefs of others. In this way they are destined to be better equipped they are to take their place in a modern British society. It is through these types of activities across the three schools that the fundamental aim of the Federation for 'community and collaboration' can be fully achieved and will serve to ensure that the pupils understand the importance of respect and leave school fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

While the curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of British values alongside learning about other nationalities and cultures.

Recommended- Currently there is scope for the Federation to explore the creation of age-appropriate opportunities for pupils to consider with their peers (across the three schools) in more detail the ***nine protected characteristics*** as outlined in the Equality Act of 2010.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

It is also possible for cases to arise because of ***discrimination by association or perception***. This means that an individual does not have a protected characteristic to be protected but is treated less favourably because of their close connection or strong association with someone who has a protected characteristic (e.g. a family member), or because someone thinks they have a protected characteristic, but they do not.

There is a need therefore to ensure that the Federation provides opportunities for children to engage with a wider range of peers in order to allow for them to challenge opinions and stereotypes, engage in open reflection and thereby build resilience and confidence to contribute to a wider audience.

Leadership and management

It is clear from the review that currently the pupils across the Federation are provided with equality of opportunity because of the sterling work being undertaken, not only within each school but also as a result of a well led and managed Federation. This strength of leadership is at all levels including a well-informed, professional and forward thinking governing body of the Federation.

The interim measures in the planned absence of the Strategic leader of the Federation are working well with effective leadership provided by the interim acting executive for two days and the co-headteacher for three days. Each of the three schools has a base leader and lines of communication are highly effective.

A further strength of the Federation lies in the leadership of English and mathematics which was singled out for praise in the inspection of one of the schools recently. This is because the formation of the Federation creates a larger pool of human resources from where expertise can be drawn to ensure that the pupils receive a high-quality curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment.

All the necessary systems are in place to ensure robust safeguarding with all staff and relevant governors trained to a high standard in child protection and the Prevent Duty.

There is an up to date single central record for the Federation.

Staff appraisal is in place and conducted by Headteachers, base leaders and School Business manager who line manage staff and support staff. Targets for individuals accurately reflect the issues of the Federation.

Termly reports are produced by the core subject leaders with a timetable for governors to monitor individual subjects across the Federation.

Federation governors are skilled, committed and supportive yet equally challenging of the work of the schools.

Leaders of the Federation monitor the quality of teaching well. They make clear their expectations to all staff, and check that these expectations are being met.

Where necessary, staff are supported to develop their knowledge and skills, and there are sufficient opportunities for staff to learn from the strong practice of some of their colleagues across the Federation.

Federation leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum that enables them to acquire a wide range of knowledge across a variety of topics, while developing useful skills. Examples include the development of scientific enquiry and the curriculum ignites pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm, and the work that they produce, including regular pieces of extended writing, is of a good standard.

Summary

The strength of the Federation lies in the synergy provided by the way in which the three schools operate, drawing on individual strengths within each school and the talents of individual adults and pupils.

Each remains unique and holds its own identity but the overall Federation is successful because of the way governors, leaders and teachers as well as the children contribute to the overall education learning offer

Across the Federation pupils are keen learners, and their behaviour in lessons reflects this.

Teachers and teaching assistants use their effective subject knowledge to communicate concepts to pupils, setting them tasks that enable them to consolidate what they have learned.

Teachers expect pupils to work hard in class, resulting in a wide range of high-quality work in pupils' exercise books and folders.

Pupils are given lots of opportunities to write at length on subjects related to their learning in the wider curriculum.

Through the effective work of the Federation schools have relationships with two much larger schools in Leeds. Visits to and from these schools enable children in the Federation to interact with larger groups from a variety of faiths and cultures.

Also, the schools are part of the 60 school strong Swaledale alliance which enables both pupils and staff to benefit from shared opportunities and negate isolation.

Finally, the Federation schools also engage with the Local cluster for a number of projects including inter school sport. All of this indicates the undoubted curriculum, personal, health, social and emotional which benefit all pupils as a result of the three schools being part of the Federation.

The effectiveness of the early years provision: quality and standards

The early years classes are well organised across the Federation, with a broad range of well-planned activities on offer to support children's development.

Staff work closely with children to challenge and question them about what they are doing, and this helps them to consolidate their understanding of essential concepts.

The children delighted in learning about the life cycle of the frog as they studied the tadpoles or enjoyed finding out about the life cycle of the butterfly when reading 'The very hungry caterpillar'. Staff work closely with children to challenge and question them about what they are doing, and this helps them to consolidate their understanding of essential concepts.

Across the Federation children's creativity is developed well, and they enjoy the activities that are on offer. These activities are carefully planned to encourage children to develop their early reading, writing and mathematical skills. This means that applying these skills becomes a normal part of their learning routine.

Children are safe in the early years, and their welfare is a high priority.

While the schools across the Federation provide effectively for children in early years there are several points which need to be considered as the Federation moves forward. These need to be borne in mind in any decisions made on the future of the Federation most particularly in the consideration of the early years provision because of the small numbers of children who attend one of the settings.

The early years settings in the Federation can *sometimes* be a child's first experience in a structured setting with teachers and groups of other children if they have not previously accessed a nursery provision. The Federation creates an opportunity to learn to share, follow instructions, and begin the foundation for learning that could have been missed in their early childhood.

The Federation sets as its priority preparing children with the adequate social skills which is vital in their early childhood and this is supported and achieved through building resilience in the company of peers. However, where there are no other peers with whom to share that experience or only two or three this limits those opportunities to attain the early learning goals linked to making relationships and social interaction with others. Thus, learning is vitally important in order for children to not only feel valued but also to become part of the wider society. The children must be given the opportunity to enjoy social interaction, and resolve their own problems, safely, in the company of their peers.

Points for consideration in providing a larger group in the early years classroom environments:

- **Children learn the value of making important choices**, taking turns, and learning to be patient when they need to and wait patiently if they are unable to choose something being used by to another peer in the setting.
- **Children build resilience and learn to take care of themselves and others** - Children's sense of self-competence and growing self-worth is crucial and learning to take care of themselves and help others.
- **Fundamental British Values are supported** – children must learn the values of other children's feelings, learn other family traditions, understand differences, and what makes them unique and yet similar to every other child.
- **Group times 'to come together' and share our views** - "circle time," is a time for children to learn and focus attention onto others, listen while others are speaking, and wait their turn to talk.
- **Promotes speech development, communication and attention, and their cognitive skills** - children's language skills are nurtured in a "language-rich" environment. Between the ages of 3 and 5, a child's vocabulary grows from 900 to 2,500 words, and their sentences become longer and more complex when around large groups of other children. A young child's cognitive skills are strengthened by engaging in a wide range of hands-on activities that challenge them to observe closely, ask questions, test their ideas or solve a problem.
- **Learning from other children will nurture a child's curiosity** - Children like to observe other peers, ask questions and listen to children's ideas during these activities. To nurture their curiosity and motivation to learn, children share interests and ideas to create activities. Children have active imaginations and learn through make-believe play. The imaginary play area in a high-quality preschool is well-stocked with costumes, "props," and child-size household items such as stoves, sinks and cupboards. It's often in this activity area that

preschool-age children progress steadily from solitary play, to one-on-one play, to complicated group play.

The 2006 Childcare Act requires local authorities to merge services together to improve outcomes for all children aged up to five years and to reduce inequalities by ensuring services are integrated to maximise benefits to families and the children's outcomes.

Improving outcomes

Children require integrated provision in order to improve their behaviour, social skills and learning. Building secure relationships with peers, and teachers can ease the transition between home and school, as it is vital for children to gain trust with others. For children who are not supported at home, full-time attendance at a large integrated early years setting can be beneficial.

Effective practice

Schools with large Integrated learning that offers a balance of free flow and structured learning demonstrate the most effective practice as the activities, experiences and materials complement the childcare and educational aims.

Play is an important part of the curriculum in all of the schools visited. The headteachers knew which aspects of learning needed to be taught directly and which could be learned through play.

Summary

Young children need lots of opportunities to interact with other children whose background, ethnicity, beliefs and values reflect the wider society of Britain in the 21st century. The building of strong and purposeful relationships ensure that the children know they are cared for to help them build confidence, cope with stress and manage emotions and help them to independently control behaviour. They also need to develop a sense of who they are and that they are valued. To feel positive about themselves, have good self-esteem and know that they belong in society.

From 'Bold beginnings- The Reception curriculum in a sample of good and outstanding primary schools' produced by HMCI in 2017 concluded the following -

A child's early education lasts a lifetime. Done well, it can mean the difference between gaining seven Bs at GCSE compared with seven Cs.7 What children are taught during Reception – the curriculum – is therefore hugely important. Such rewards are by no means guaranteed.

Therefore, securing children's personal, social and emotional readiness to learn, including resilience, perseverance, concentration, the ability to listen, to take turns and to cooperate can best be achieved when children are able to interact with a larger number of their peers wherever possible.

