



Neil Smith SEN/D and Inclusion Manager  
Camden LA - School Improvement Service

Headteacher  
Christ Church NW1 Primary School

June 2013

Dear Paula,

[Camden Award for Inclusion – Summer Term 2013](#)

### **The Outcome**

I am very pleased to confirm that Christ Church NW1 Primary School has achieved the Camden Award for Inclusion in the Summer Term 2013

The Evaluation Threshold (1 = Embedded, Highly Effective, Sustainable OR 2 = In Place, Embedding, Effective) was achieved in all 28 of the quality statements.

Please convey our congratulations and appreciation to all members of the school community.

The validation visit was undertaken by senior members of the School Improvement Service:

Neil Smith - SEN/D and Inclusion Manager  
Una McCall – Early Years Foundation Stage Consultant

Thank you for welcoming us into your school.

We would wish to thank you and Lorraine (Inclusion Manager) in particular for planning and arranging such a productive visit which covered all of the key aspects of the Camden Award for Inclusion process. The preparation and presentation process was exemplary and provided a very full body of evidence about inclusion and outcomes for children with Additional Educational Needs.

We enjoyed working with the whole staff who were open and enthusiastic about their work on inclusion. Each person we met demonstrated the values and high expectations promoted by school leaders. We also enjoyed talking to the children who were confident, open and articulate about their life in school.



## The Evidence

The Camden Award for Inclusion focuses primarily on the most vulnerable learners in the school, for example, those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEN/D), pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils eligible for Free School Meals and pupils from low income families. However, we know from experience and research that inclusive whole school procedures, support strategies and teaching approaches that benefit these vulnerable children are also supportive of ALL learners.

We used a variety of evidence to validate the school's own judgements against the 28 Quality Statements which focus on Outcomes, Leadership and Management and Provision for children with "Additional Educational Needs", including:

Before the visit reviews of:

- RAISEonline data
- Case Studies – providing powerful evidence of inclusive practice and well-targeted interventions and personalised support and outcomes
- Camden Professional Partner Records of Visit
- Feedback from specialist services, including Camden's Visual Impairment advisory teacher
- The School Website
- The Achievement for All video
- Review of current policies and plans (e.g. Equalities, Teaching and Learning, Inclusion/SEN, Behaviour)
- School identification and budget information

During the visit we undertook the following:

- Learning Walks, classroom and lunch times observations
- A range of discussions with teaching and support staff, the SEN governor, children and parents of children with Special and Additional Educational Needs (before and during the school day)
- Review of a very wide variety of relevant documentation, including lesson plans, exemplar Individual Education Plans, minutes of governing body meetings

When coming to a conclusion we put all the evidence together through a process of "triangulation" - for example what children, parents/carers and staff tell us and what we read and what we see.

The award has a currency of three years from this date with a mid-term review (Spring 2015) to agree one or two areas of provision and/or outcome to be enhanced and refreshed.



## **The context – key indicators**

Christ Church School identifies (January 2013) 18.7% of its children as having a special educational need (compared to the Camden average of 18.1%). 2.6% of children have a SEN statement. The Camden average for pupils with a SEN statement is 2.4%.

The school is in the top quintile for pupils known to be eligible for Free School Meals, for pupils from minority ethnic groups, for pupils whose first language is not English and in terms of key school deprivation indicators (RAISE online 2013). There are currently no children looked after by the local authority.

## **School Ethos**

The school's Mission Statement sends a very clear message about the values, principles and actions which will ensure a safe and inclusive environment where all can achieve:

*"We aim to cater for each individual, taking particular account of any specific needs or abilities. We ..... emphasise health and safety, enjoyment and achievement and the beginnings of responsibility for themselves and others. We believe that effective learning takes place when children work in a purposeful and stimulating environment that supports a wide range of learning styles. Mutual respect between adults and children promotes excellent behaviour and well developed social skills. With this approach we seek to achieve high academic standards."*

We observed an inclusive assembly where these values were promoted and celebrated: children received awards for their achievements – for example in terms of their creativity, their perseverance, their capacity of caring and friendship. Children were then invited to give awards to adults for their gifts and talents that benefit the school community, for example, their knowledge, their helpfulness and kindness and their contributions to music. Music and singing enhanced the occasion, "creed, colour and name won't matter". Finally children were encouraged to pray in their own way after readings from the Bible and the Qur'an.

The inclusion values and ethos of this school are apparent, expressed and demonstrated in other ways, including, through:

- Clear equalities policies and monitoring
- The staff code of conduct and staff appointment procedures
- The school website and brochure
- The school's Achievement for All Film
- The recent Investors in People Award



A notable feature pervades the school – the children express and articulate the vision and values of a safe and caring school.

### **The Children**

We spoke to children throughout the day and met the school council (whose composition reflects the intake of the school) for an informal discussion about their role and their life in school. They are appointed on an equal opportunities basis – to ensure a gender balance – and have to set out their personal “manifesto” and explain what skills they bring to the council. They carry out class surveys and feel included and listened to and gave examples of how they had brought about changes.

A Year 6 pupil told us that, “everyone cares for each other and treats each other like a family so you feel really safe at school”. Children (and their parents) told us that they feel safe and happy. They understand how the school promotes and rewards good behaviour – for example through the classroom charts and Golden Time - and how and why children (rarely) get into trouble for poor behaviour. They think that the system is fair.

As part of a Camden project on current SEN developments at national and local level, the Inclusion manager has been consulting children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) about their life in school. Their responses are helping the school to develop aspects of its “Local Offer” for children and families with SEN, for example:

- What helps you make progress? *Having targets stuck in their books and seeing them visually on the wall helped them to move forward.*
- What helps you learn? *The teacher doing examples on the board and showing me different ways of doing things*
- What does the Ideal classroom look like? *Lots of maths games, using an IPAD. An adult to help me learn more. A lap top to help me change mistakes easily.*

Children with Additional Educational Needs are engaged and involved in many ways, for example, through:

- their attendance at a range of clubs and activities, including music making – with participation levels carefully monitored
- being playground friends and helping younger children at play times: they apply formally and upon appointment receive training and attend fortnightly meetings
- having roles of responsibility in Year 6
- their involvement in a buddy reading scheme with younger children (where their own reading has improved significantly)

A pupil with a SEN statement has made his own vivid Power Point presentation for his Annual Review meeting attended by his parents.



## The Parents/Carers

We spoke to randomly selected parents at the beginning of the school day and had an in-depth conversation with the parents of a child with a SEN statement. The consistent message was positive and affirming: the school is a safe and stimulating environment where their children are learning and making progress; senior leaders and all staff are approachable, listen, are responsive and flexible. They, “always find time”, for parents at the end of the day, “even for the small things that are worrying you”. They take concerns very seriously, for example an incident of bullying, and make sure that parents are happy with the outcome. One parent told us that she, her mother and grandmother had attended that school and it that was, “always getting better”.

Parents of children with SEN are especially positive about the work of the school: “they provide really good help for my child; they give me ideas for home learning and advice about helping with homework; they gave me materials to help my son make sentences.” One parent observed a one to one session run by a Speech Therapist with his child and was able to discuss how to support his learning at home.

Parents of children in the Case Studies felt well supported by the school.

A newly appointed parent governor is supporting clear and effective communication and partnership between school leaders and the Muslim community.

Partnership with parents is a strength of the school: it involves, responds and engages with parents in many other ways, for example, through:

- The accessibility of the Head teacher and senior leaders at the beginning and end of day in the playground
- The use of “Structured/Listening Conversations” three times a year for parents of children with SEN – with actions agreed and recorded and a review process built in
- Workshops for parents throughout the school, for example, on Ocean Maths (increasingly well attended), Stay and Play, Sound-Abouts and Phonics sessions.
- Parent involvement in lessons, for example, a lesson in the Nursery class on babies
- A parents “drop in” run by a very experienced LSA
- Portfolio meetings for the parents of EYFS children
- A homework club for children unable to do work at home (for a variety of reasons)
- Support for parents on helping their child with her/his homework
- Support for maths learning at home using “Mathletics”



The school is developing a new reporting system designed to give greater clarity for parents about National Curriculum levels – explaining the difference between progress and standards - and where their children stand in relation to national expectations.

### **Impact – Standards, Progress, Attendance and Well-Being**

The Camden Professional Partner CPP reported on 2012 national assessment outcomes and noted that at Key stage 1, results have been below national levels for the last two years. However, this year Key stage 1 results are above, demonstrating that current strategies have been effective in raising standards.

At Key stage 2 attainment is above the national average and progress is well above for all pupils – signalled as significantly positive in RAISEonline. She confirmed that the school’s judgement on achievement as “good” is based on sound evidence. FSM eligible Children outperformed their national FSM peer in English but did slightly less well in mathematics. Maths teaching, learning and outcomes are a high priority for the school.

The school records and monitors exclusions carefully. The level of fixed term exclusions is low though there has been a slight increase on the 2011-12 numbers. There are clear and strong procedures to promote good behaviour and safety in the school. There has been one permanent exclusion – an isolated instance - in this school year with the context and determining factors carefully recorded and analysed.

Attendance is high at 96.72% - there has been a strong strategy to improve and a concerted drive to communicate clear messages to families. Features of the strategy include:

- attendance certificates
- strong governor involvement
- close links with the Education Welfare officer – including supportive home visits
- meetings with the head teacher to remove potential barriers to high attendance

The highly visible attendance chart positioned where parents come into the school demonstrates the importance the school attaches to this issue

### **Management and Leadership for Inclusion**

The management and leadership of Christ Church school are characterised by an unremitting focus on ensuring equality of opportunity, on the mitigation of disadvantage (temporary or more long term), the removal of barriers to participation and engagement and on the pursuit of high standards of achievement. The Head



teacher drives the vision but all senior leaders play a critical part in making the vision a reality.

The school improvement model/strategy for raising standards for vulnerable groups developed under the Achievement for All project informs and inspires the work of the school. We would like to acknowledge Louise's leadership of the successful pilot project. The model is evolving and developing and this is a great strength of the school, for example, in terms of staffing structure and roles such as the new Vulnerable Groups Coordinator ("responsible for driving up standards of vulnerable groups to ensure that these standards are comparable with their peers"), and a high profile Inclusion Manager with the time and status to support changes and promote improvement.

The school "Area" of inclusion has a dedicated 12 month Action Plan which provides the starting points for planned improvements, clear short term objectives and success criteria, time scales and monitoring arrangements. The priorities are well judged (e.g. managing SEN finance, writing workable IEPs, engaging with the governing body).

The role of Teaching Assistants in the classroom is set out clearly in their Job Description, for example, to, "help children to learn as effectively and independently as possible both in group situations and on their own e.g. clarifying and explaining instructions ..."

The Inclusion Manager ensures that the impact of a skilful and committed team of Teaching and Learning Support Assistants on children's learning, progress and well-being is consistently high. TAs and LSAs know that they can approach the Inclusion Manager for help and guidance and even the seemingly "quite small things".

The support is comprehensive and involves, for example:

- ensuring that they receive timely and relevant "SEN" training and support from specialist services such as Occupational and Speech Therapists
- meeting regularly to discuss their work with minutes and action points
- providing time in the morning for them to meet and plan with the Class Teacher
- training them to make a contribution to marking and feedback to ensure an effective dialogue with teachers
- involving them in rigorous Performance Management with PM targets linked to the progress of individual children and where appropriate the School Development plan and a full report at the end of the PM cycle with a record of strengths and areas for development

Leadership and management of inclusion are rigorous and well-focused on improving outcomes, through, for example by:



- monitoring by senior leaders of the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for vulnerable learners – a focus on “quality first teaching”
- undertaking scrutiny of the books/work of children with SEN with written feedback to teachers and agreed next steps for action
- analysing and reviewing the impact of all interventions (academic and “well-being”) with an evaluation as to overall effectiveness – will the intervention be repeated?
- ensuring that the advice and guidance of specialist teams reaches the classroom, for example, Speech Therapist, the advisory teacher for Visual Impairment
- adapting classrooms and resources to the needs of individual children, e.g. a “screen” and maths resources for a visually impaired pupil; a sloped writing desk purchased on the advice of an Occupational Therapist
- undertaking strong and moderated tracking and assessment procedures which ensure effective termly progress meetings - pupils who are failing to progress receive relevant support
- effective management of the SEN budget – working with the school’s Bursar
- involving parents in supporting their children’s learning
- ensuring effective procedures for transition between years and key stages, for example, hand over meetings, class swaps, attending the pupil progress meetings for the new class,

The Governing Body is kept well informed through its committees and the Head teacher’s Termly Report about national and local developments in SEN/D and inclusion and about how the school is supporting children, in particular those with more complex needs. Governors are actively involved in reviewing the SEN policy and exclusion meetings.

A recently appointed governor is helping to ensure good communication with the parent Muslim community on a wide range of issues, including curriculum and collective worship

Improving the governing body’s capacity to support and challenge through training on data is a target for improvement.

The school is introducing a new format for reporting which makes clear for parents the level of progress and attainment of their child in relation to national expectations. Teachers will also report on each child’s effort and attitude towards learning. The report will usefully give “next steps” advice on how to reach and/or exceed the national standard, for example, “include more detail when writing up scientific investigations”. Alongside this development is a commitment to provide more training for parents on how to support their child’s learning, for example, using the same methods and language as those employed at the school.



## Provision – Teaching and Learning

School leaders place a high priority on ensuring that teaching is meeting the needs of all learners. The school development plan progress report (2012-13) notes that in the most recent round of Leadership Team observations all teaching was at least good with some teaching being consistently outstanding.

The Camden Professional Partner noted (2012 report) features of effective learning and teaching, for example, *“teachers’ expectations are high and they plan activities which are creative and designed to be motivating, actively engaging pupils in learning. Speaking and listening to promote improvements in writing is a focus across all the phases and the school’s monitoring shows that pupils, particularly boys, are responding well to the focus on role play is resulting in significant gains. This is evident in how they work together; engage actively in tasks and show high levels of enjoyment, which are translated into the quality of their writing.”*

Lesson plans set out clearly how the needs of different children will be met through, for example, differentiation (e.g. teacher modelling, support from 2<sup>nd</sup> adult on sentence structure and word choice; individualised maths and literacy targets), providing assistive technology (e.g. a lap-top and a screen for a Visually Impaired child), seating and grouping plans and through setting out a clear and planned role for the second adult (for example, providing prompts, repetition and gestures).

Display is designed to support learning and motivate and inspire children to be successful learners and citizens, for example, through posters on “Connectives” and “Openers”; the Language of mathematics; rules of punctuation; welcome signs in different languages.

In different classrooms we noted:

- a well-stocked writing area – a variety of books including some from different cultures
- children using the visual timetable
- second adults using correct language of mathematics, for example, denominator, numerator
- a map of children’s languages/family origin and flags
- children independently accessing resources
- boys improving their writing through role play
- imaginative speaking and listening activities
- examples of successful writing in genre – e.g. an “Ofsted style report”
- use of Interactive White Board by the teacher to motivate and engage (successfully)
- examples of collaborative and independent learning

Senior leaders provide support for class teachers on “inclusive teaching”, for example, by:



- providing training specific to the needs of the children, for example, on strategies for children new to English from EAL specialists: the whole year focus on speaking and listening
- Supporting teachers in the use and review of Individual Education Plans for children with SEN.
- Setting out clear guidance and expectations in policies on Teaching and Learning, Display and SEN + Inclusion
- Supporting effective transitions between years through for example, hand over meetings
- Keeping an up to date Class Inclusion File

The highly successful two year Boys Writing project provides an example of a comprehensive and imaginatively planned strategy to improve the quality of writing for an underachieving cohort of boys moving from year 5 to year 6. Key features of this project include:

- a programme of training, support and monitoring
- a whole school writing week when children were given a book
- writing interventions for pupils making slow progress
- use of digital technology
- building an outdoor “cabin” where children can read quietly

Steps are being taken to embed and sustain this strategy, including a commitment to engage fully with fathers in supporting their children and to recruit more male staff.

### **Support for children - Promoting Well-Being and Behaviour**

Promoting the well-being and self-esteem of children is a high priority for the school. Parents told us that their children feel safe and well looked after in the school. Children told us they feel “really safe at school”.

The policy on behaviour (revised for 2012-13) sets out clearly responsibilities and expectations on rewards and sanctions within an ethos of fairness, nurture and mutual respect. All staff are trained on the revised policy at the start of each year. Meticulous records are kept of behaviour incidents and any fixed term exclusions. Pastoral Support Programmes are devised for pupils who are at risk of exclusion

The school promotes safety, well-being and positive behaviour in a variety of ways, including:

- a range of well-planned and carefully supervised activities at lunchtime (monitored weekly by senior leaders) – greatly enjoyed by the children.
- nurture and small group support for more vulnerable children,
- whole staff training on “de-escalation” and behaviour management
- a system of “playground friends”
- an anti-bullying and a social justice week
- clear policies on bullying and E-safety



## The Fine Detail of Inclusion

Inclusive thinking and practice permeate the School. The following examples represent the “fine detail” of inclusive practice:

- Making a range of adjustments – for example, providing taxi for ease of transport; training staff on medication - to ensure that children with exceptional disabilities are able to take part in school trips
- Providing funds to buy new PE kits so that children can take part in after school sports clubs
- Ensuring continuity of education and peer friendship for a child spending prolonged periods of time in a hospital setting – class friends visiting the child in hospital
- Helping parents to take part in Annual Reviews by providing care for younger children if this is needed – booking meetings with parents with their convenience in mind

## Sharing Inclusive Practice

We discussed the most significant strengths that are making such a positive contribution to inclusion – practice the school might share with other schools in Camden. We suggest the following:

- Building on the Achievement for All legacy – including **the Structured Conversation, tracking and interventions and support for the “wider outcomes”** – as a model to raise standards and improve progress for all vulnerable children
- Support for the class teacher in teaching and including children with SEN/D, especially those with ASD
- Early identification and assessment of needs
- Management and deployment of Teaching and Learning Support Assistants
- Effective use of expertise and guidance from specialist services – reaching into the classroom
- The inclusive lunchtime - range of enjoyable and well supervised activities
- Responsive and flexible partnership with parents

Camden schools benefit from having access to exemplar materials from other schools. Could you identify some documentation that would be useful for other SENDCOs?



We valued many other aspects of the school including:

- the quality of relationships between children and between adults
- the commitment to “personalisation” in support for children’s learning and well-being AND in terms of support for their parents
- the welcoming community ethos and celebration of difference
- the Senior Leadership team, including the Inclusion Manager, teaching a range of classes as part of PPA time – giving a direct understanding of needs and the challenges of inclusive teaching
- very good support and liaison between Nursery and Reception
- very positive improvements in attendance through judicious use of rewards and sanctions

Through effective self-evaluation and its involvement in the CAI (Camden Award for Inclusion) process, the school has identified several priority developments for 2013-14 (validated during the visit – some of which may be already underway), including:

- Evaluate new SEN funding arrangements
- Develop parental knowledge of progress, standards and data
- Build on “gaining” pupil voice in KS 1
- Investigate the possibility of new EMA role
- Support parents in understanding the role of specialist services

We endorse all of these points for development and suggest that the school in addition:

- Continues its development of governance to ensure appropriate challenge and support on SEN/D and inclusion matters
- Continues developments on developmental marking to ensure that formative assessment leads to accelerated progress
- Develops the conversation with parents on “effort” to include the need to build resilience and “skills for learning”

We also noted that ALL schools will require an action plan to respond to new requirements set out in the Children and Families legislation – for implementation in September 2014, including a new framework for the SEN policy and the publication of a school Local Offer for different Special Educational Needs.

We enjoyed our visit to your school enormously. We believe that other schools can learn from what you are doing and take back to their leadership teams, governing



bodies, classrooms and playgrounds some of the creative and innovative ideas and approaches that are so successful – the small details that create the whole picture.

You will be rightly proud of what Christ Church NW1 School achieves for its children, its families and the local community day in day out.

We can help you to plan an award ceremony – whole school assemblies work very well – and arrange the awarding of a plaque and certificate. We will record the event for the Camden Bulletin and local press if this is the wish of the school.

With very best wishes for the rest of the school year.

Sincerely,

Neil Smith – SEN/D and Inclusion Manager  
Una McCall – EYFS consultant