



Historical Association Quality Mark Final Report

Visit to Eaton Park Academy

Date: 25th November 2021

Context:

Eaton Park Academy is a two-form entry school with 420 pupils currently on roll with an additional 60 place nursery. It is set within the conurbation of the pottery towns and is in an acute area of deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is 38% while those eligible for FSM is 35%, both are well above the national average. The proportion of children with special educational needs is 18% while 7% of pupils are EAL. A number of children have varying safeguarding issues.

Evidence for the assessment was obtained through a scrutiny of an excellent portfolio, a learning walk, and discussions with the Senior Leadership Team, Class Teachers, children, and the Subject Leader. The assessor also observed lessons across different age ranges.

1.) Learning Teaching and Achievement: *The outcome for section 1 of the QM criteria is that the academy has attained silver in all areas of this section.*

The subject leader engages with pupil voice on a regular basis. This provides insightful comments from the children enabling the subject leader to plan CPD and changes to the history curriculum. Previous pupil voice has led to CPD to support the children in how to articulate their understanding about history. The discussion with the children confirmed that some were able to link history to specific periods of time such as the Stone Age. There is now a need to make sure all children consistently have the capacity to link different periods of history together. The book trawls, learning walk and the lesson observations evidenced that history is taught well with good questioning, motivated children with all enthusiastically taking part in the lessons. Evidence from other monitoring and evaluation strategies would indicate that teaching is good. The Progression Objective document is detailed and thorough having been introduced in 2019 and is now embedded across the Alpha Trust. This has positively impacted on children's learning showing good progress in knowledge and skills. Data shows that there was a dip in attainment in years 4 and 5 last year. Although Interim teacher assessments and analysis shows that these children are making progress to expected age related levels and above, there does need to be a deeper analysis of why this happened and what impact the interventions have had to ensure that this is not a trend. Following an audit in 2019 the school invested in a range of new resources. Evidence shows that this investment has facilitated a development in knowledge and skills in KSI and KSII. It has also impacted on the enquiry-based learning strategy with children asking more questions and being more naturally inquisitive about history. In Early Years progress has been evidenced through continuous provision, texts and small world learning. The progress through the school has been evidenced through deeper questioning which has also shown a greater depth of history understanding. This now needs to be embedded into the monitoring and evaluation processes so that the impact of the continued use of the resources can be analysed and further developed. The subject leader commented that the children need greater access to these resources to aid learning outside of the classroom and at home. Some schools, through COVID, photographed their resources and artefacts, wrote an explanation about them and an enquiry question adding them to the website. This might be something to consider. Displays across the school are very good. They include a good use of vocabulary and key enquiry questions. The marking policy is effective enabling teachers to address misconceptions and assess knowledge, understanding and skills. Evidence from the lesson observations showed that teachers challenge opinions and children's enquiry questions showing a good subject knowledge. The school trialled 'Exit Tickets' in Y4 and Y6 assessing recall strategy and monitoring progress in knowledge. This should be rolled out to all year groups and its impact monitored. Curriculum Maestro was also introduced in 2020/2021 to show progress and identify specific target areas. The Learning Journey documents follow the children through the school from EYFS to Y6. These are an excellent way of showing personalised progression in learning. All topics begin with a knowledge grid and launch day. Children complete the grid as they progress through the topic showing their journey of understanding. Progress in attainment is age related or above compared to the Academy Trust and to national expectations.

Points for consideration:

- To develop opportunities for children to be able to link different periods of history together. This may be achieved through child forums between classes discussing the different periods and how they might link together, see section 3.
- To embed the Exit Tickets across all year groups to aid teacher assessment at the end of topics.
- To explore ways of making the resources and artefacts accessible on the website.

2.) Leadership: *The outcome for section 2 of the QM criteria is that the academy has attained silver in all areas of this section.*

Evidence shows a good time allocation for history. The school marks significant national events such as Remembrance Day, St George's Day and VE Day. They are proud of the rich heritage of the Potteries and commissioned a mural connecting the links to the potteries and other local histories. Monitoring and Evaluation of history is professionally undertaken following clear structures. These include a good policy for history, clear roles and responsibilities for subject leaders and monitoring and evaluation strategies which inform impact statements on attainment, CPD and subsequent action plans. The school evaluates children's attainment using a range of assessment strategies including Knowledge Recall Grids, taking part in short topic debates, the topic exit ticket mentioned above and end of topic 'what I know writing'. These strategies are evaluated and followed up by pupil interviews. The academy has links with the wider Alpha Trust and two other local primary schools specifically for history. Some good work is being done already including the History Spotlight initiative, sharing good practice and next steps work. This could be improved further by developing research opportunities in history and also developing self-evaluation strategies, based on the already good analysis of the monitoring findings, to enable the compiling of all data surrounding teaching, learning, curriculum, assessment and attainment across the schools. This would really help with developing CPD opportunities, widening participation across a number of schools thereby broadening each other's perspectives and aspirations for history.

Points for consideration:

- To further develop links with the ALPHA Trust and other local schools.
- To instigate research opportunities for history across the schools and Alpha Trust.

3.) Curriculum: *The outcome for section 3 of the QM criteria is that the academy has attained silver in all areas of this section.*

The EYFS curriculum is well designed and planned with good progression into KSI and then into KSII. In KSII the curriculum is chronologically based covering a range of periods. The subject leader has developed a good Progression Objective map which supports teachers in their medium-term planning. Cornerstones has been the main driver for learning and the curriculum. However, the school have now developed their own curriculum, which is in its infancy, but the monitoring does indicate that the children are more engaged with history and learning. This is something that needs to be carefully monitored and refined overtime to ensure that it meets the needs of the children at Eaton Park Academy. The curriculum has also been adapted to incorporate diversity both in specific related topics and in other topics where appropriate. The children engage with topic launch days, which have proved very successful, together with a planned and well-structured enrichment programme. The monitoring of the enrichment activities shows that there has been a positive impact on enthusing children and developing their own knowledge, skills understanding and enquiry skills. This is also evidenced by the children actively engaging with history at home and bringing into school work they have done. What were particularly impressive were the 3D DT models on display. Enquiry based learning is a relatively new concept in the school and was introduced by the subject leader. The staff are keen to embrace it further having seen the benefits in the classroom. More CPD is needed to ensure that there is a consistent approach and understanding about what enquiry-based learning is and there were some inconsistencies when talking to the teachers. There are good cross-curricular links, please see section 4. The school strives to ensure that the children make links between periods of history. This is underpinned by the use of the chronological timelines and also the progression objective document mentioned above. Evidence from children's books and monitoring by the subject leader indicates that some children do make links within the periods in their year bands but this needs to be developed so that children gain a deeper awareness across periods taught in the school from KSI to KSII. This links seamlessly with section 1 where the school needs to embed its work on developing links to different periods in history. The school are aware of this and have highlighted it as an area for further development.

Points for consideration:

- To develop opportunities for children to be able to link different periods of history together. This may be through child forums between classes discussing the different periods and how they might link together, see section 1.
- To continue to monitor and refine the curriculum ensuring that it continues to meet the changing needs of the children.
- To plan CPD based on enquiry-based learning so that there is a common understanding about what it is and how it can be used to aid learning.

4.) Enrichment: *The outcome for section 4 of the QM criteria is that the academy has attained silver in all areas of this section.*

There are some good links between other subjects especially English. A wide range of good quality history texts are used to develop speaking, listening and writing. Other cross-curricular links evidenced in the portfolio and displays include Art/DT, geography, science, maths and SMSC. Based on conversations with the children and teachers these links have clarity. However, links to other subjects could be explored such as music, drama and RE. Topic link books were introduced in 2020-2021. Due to COVID these were not utilised to their full capacity. These need to be embedded and monitored to self-evaluate the impact they are having on children's learning. The school are scaling back support staff intervention work in the afternoons to enable them to concentrate on developing learning in the foundation subjects. Trialling has already shown a greater impact in reading levels using the knowledge organisers because the support staff can concentrate on subject vocabulary and subject specific comprehension skills. This needs to be monitored to show the impact it has over time. The school offers a range of well-planned, exciting and worthwhile enrichment trips to support learning. The children talked at length about these trips and were clearly enthused by them. The website is informative and is currently being updated by the Trust. The class DoJo is good but members of the public do not have access to it. There really needs to be a section for all subjects to showcase what the children have been learning. This can easily be achieved whilst also observing any safeguarding issues. Children could give anonymous oral accounts through hyperlinks, they could write subject newsletters and the excellent children's work could be posted as well, including the superb history homework that the children engage with. This could be a project for the KSII children to get involved in and manage.

Points for consideration:

- To embed the Topic Link Books across the school monitoring the impact that these are having on children's learning.
- To self-evaluate the continued impact the teaching assistants are having on learning in history.
- To encourage the children to play an active part in developing the history website page and being responsible for updating it.

Final Comments:

The portfolio and visit were very well presented. The children in particular are highly enthusiastic and motivated. History makes a positive contribution to the learning because of the subject leader's professionalism and competence together with the enthusiastic support from the SLT and staff.

The assessor would like to thank the subject leader, staff, and pupils of Eaton Park Academy for making him feel most welcome through the day.

Award made: YES

Level: SILVER

Date of Award:

25th November 2021

Renewal Date:

25th November 2024