



Basic Skills Quality Mark - Hull Visit Feedback Report

School	Mersey Primary School	Visit date	Wednesday 25 th November 2015
Assessor	Caroline Crossland	Time on site	6 hours

Ofsted Status	Good
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Visit Type	Initial
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The Assessor spoke to the following people:

Headteacher and Senior Leaders Yes	Literacy Subject Leader Yes	Numeracy Subject Leader Yes	Assessment Manager Yes
SENCo Yes	Pupil representatives No	Governor No	Parent representative(s) No
Other staff Well being officer	NOR - 203		

Did the Assessor receive the Self Audit Form prior to the visit? Yes	Did the Assessor receive progress data prior to the visit? Yes
'Learning Walk' completed? Yes	Relevant evidence-base reviewed? Yes

<p>Does the school meet the requirements of the Basic Skills Quality Mark? YES - all stakeholders, who are dedicated and committed, have worked exceptionally hard to raise standards in Basic Skills, and the improvement over the past two years is nothing short of impressive! Many, many congratulations to all.</p>
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<p>The previous development points have been implemented N/A</p>
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Recent initiatives / developments

In their mission statement Mersey Primary Academy commits to: "striving to ensure achievement for all: working in partnership with our families to enable learners to develop emotionally, socially and academically within a safe and secure environment. " This statement is a completely accurate representation of the academy. Every measure undertaken is carefully thought through with the goal of empowering their pupils to be independent learners who can achieve success and fundamentally instilling them with self belief - the fundamental ingredient to success. The school recognise and embrace parents as an intrinsic part in their child's learning and encourage their participation every step of the way. The safe, secure and stimulating environment is evident throughout the academy and is perhaps summed up perfectly by one pupil who, during lunchtime, casually pointed out to the head teacher; "You always have friends when you're at Mersey!"

The academy has many strengths but the key strengths were found to be:

1. The rigorous, robust and relentless monitoring cycle to challenge all leaders which the Executive Principal was intrinsic in establishing.
2. The ease of use for all staff for the assessment procedures which feed into tailored intervention for all children reflecting the inclusive environment of the academy.
3. The drive to develop quality first teaching throughout the academy has been established and embedded through the use of pedagogical pods which are now being developed across the cluster.
4. Distributive leadership and transparency of policy to practise has created an all encompassing learning environment where all stakeholders and children are equally valued and included in the rich tapestry of school life.
5. The innovative writing cycle and marking and feedback policy combined which demonstrates accelerated progression for all children.

Summary of Evidence.

Elements	Strengths	Recommended action (if applicable)
1 A whole school strategy and planning to improve performance in basic skills	What is perhaps most striking about Mersey Academy is the all encompassing learning environment where all stakeholders and children are equally valued and included in the rich tapestry of school life; something which the Academy has worked hard to achieve. Parents are listened to and their ideas acted upon, seen most recently from the review of the homework policy. There is a strong pupil voice with an active school council and the academy have a head boy and girl who play an active part in academy life and are involved, amongst other things, in work scrutinies. TAs are valued and through training and involvement understand the academy data and as such have a clear idea and understanding of the whole school strategic approaches. This determined effort to include all stakeholders in whole school strategies has had a huge impact as it has created a unified vision with the collective	

goal of raising standards which everyone works hard to achieve.

Leading this whole academy approach is a dedicated leadership team which follows a clear distributive model. They strive to raise standards with much time given to developing curriculum areas, monitoring and supporting staff with peer coaching through the pedagogical pods. Everything they undertake is done with improvement in mind and impact is clearly recorded with ways forward noted. They have created an open environment where the transparency of policy to practise has served to create an inclusive, nurturing and supportive learning environment where teachers and learners can confidentially grow in expertise.

The academy has worked exceptionally hard over the past couple of years to raise standards and in the just the last year has introduced an impressive number of effective whole academy strategic approaches and planning to improve performance in basic skills. These include: the writing cycle; the introduction of Singapore Maths to develop and embed skills; the development of CPD; Eazmag data which informs subjects leaders next steps; the robust, rigorous and relentless monitoring cycle; Bluesky programme; colour coded SIP; running ADPs for the academy; Rag rating assessment so can track progress between the terms and is easy and accessible for all staff (teachers, TAs and governors) to use; Pedagogical pods.

The academy has a clear strategic approach to self evaluation with Academy Development Plans for each key area of; SEN, Maths, Writing, Reading, Phonics and Leadership. The plans, which are clear, succinct and effective, identify; the area to improve; the current position; what will be different for the children, families and staff; a list of clear actions with accountability; resources required; stakeholders involved and performance management links.

Each plan has a priority and these include: to continue to ensure leadership and management are effective in driving the academy forward; to continue to accelerate progress and raise standards in Maths for all pupils - particularly

increase the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels and making better than expected progress and improve access for less able children; To continue to raise standards in Phonics for all pupils; particularly increasing the percentage of pupils passing the Phonics Screening test compared to the National Average; To continue to raise standards in Reading for all pupils; particularly increasing the percentage of pupils working securely within age related expectations; To continue to raise standards in all areas of the curriculum for pupils with Special Educational Needs; To continue to accelerate progress and raise standards in writing for all pupils; particularly increasing the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels and making better than expected progress.

The rigorous, robust and relentless monitoring cycle to challenge all leaders, which the Executive Principal was intrinsic in establishing, is a strength of the academy and demonstrates the commitment to raising standards. Monitoring, which is robust, includes: the collection and analysis of data; learning walks; lesson observations; work and book scrutinies; planning and monitoring; and discussions with pupils. The cycle is laid out in a grid which all staff have a copy of and this organised, transparent approach is welcomed. This term already there have been two lesson observations, seven work scrutinies and three learning walks. Feedback follows with ways forward highlighted and next steps set. Staff understand it is a supportive procedure designed to nurture and help the academy move forward in the teaching and learning of basic skills. Findings are shared with all teachers and TAs alike thus creating a bigger picture. These measures work alongside an effective cycle to triangulate achievement and progress and thereby highlighting weaker areas. CPD, which are linked to the main foci of development, then evolves from this and pedagogical pods are created for staff to support one another through an informal coaching and mentoring programme to develop their skills.

Mersey Primary Academy utilise the Sheffield Stat assessment system, which all academies in the School Partnership Trust are using. Formative assessment is used at the end of each

session and children are then grouped and supported to achieve LO from session and to fill in any gaps. Data is analysed and vulnerable groups are drawn up and monitored. In addition children are set work to deepen learning using mastery skills and challenge.

Data analysis of local and national data is used. Targets are set and reviewed on a termly basis.

Moderation is robust and occurs frequently both internally between classes and as a school the academy further make good use of their cluster links and with cross cluster moderation ensuring consistency.

Mersey Primary Academy work hard to ensure all pupils feel part of the caring, safe and secure environment, whilst individuality is encouraged they strive to main a sense of school unity. This commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion can be seen, at its simplest, through the equal opportunities and Inclusion Policy. It builds on this by striving to ensure that all learners, regardless of background or ability, access the curriculum . Furthermore, children who have an EHCP are (where possible) taught within the classroom environment and work is differentiated to meet their needs again demonstrating the inclusive environment within the academy.

The academy makes a strong commitment to meet the needs of all its learners this is an area that Mersey Primary Academy really should be congratulated on, this commitment to providing opportunities for all its pupils to build on their learning and basic skills, often measures which extend beyond the academy day is a real strength. The academy strive to ensure all pupils achieve and have access to basic skills through a plethora of measures to raise standards which include: additional reading opportunities for all children to be involved in, both at home and within academy; Extended days; Y6 lunchtime mentoring; Year 2 and 6 interventions; Maths and Reading stars;; EWB support; and booster sessions. The closing the gap sessions are extremely successful and taken by teaching staff in the afternoon ensure quality first teaching is given to those who really need it and this crucial input ensures a continuation of good progress across the

	academy.	
<p>2</p> <p>Analysis of the assessment of pupil performance in basic skills</p>	<p>Mersey Primary Academy has an effective assessment and analysis cycle, which all stakeholders are involved in, and leads to accountability and action at individual pupil level. The school makes use of a wide range of formative and summative data which includes: academy data; teacher assessment analysis; short term plans; reading and phonic records.</p> <p>All staff have a detailed understanding of assessment and data across the whole academy and are involved in the assessment process, indeed data is regular analysed at weekly phase meetings. Furthermore, subject leaders are responsible for the tracking of data across their phase.</p> <p>This successful tracking and evaluating of data by all staff is used to identify: progress and attainment; inform future planning; identify under achieving pupils; more able pupils; this then allows for the provision of a rigorous system of tailored intervention through closing the gap sessions with class teachers in afternoon sessions or alternatively short term interventions.</p> <p>All vulnerable groups are thus receiving targeted support and a strength of the academy is the provision of constant tailored interventions for all pupils for Phonics, Reading, Numeracy, Writing & Grammar. It is important to note these groupings are fluid and flexible and based solely on need as groups are adapted and refined throughout the year.</p> <p>The academy work hard to ensure reading is closely analysed. There is an established system for reading whereby reading is regularly assessed through the use of the PM Benchmarking Kit to support teacher assessment. This is then moderated through year group, phase, cross-phase and academy moderation meetings.</p> <p>The academy have clear appropriate procedures in place for assessing the basic needs of learners joining the academy which include: using CEM Aspects for FS1 And BASE for FS2.</p> <p>In the Foundation Stage assessment for learning is also extremely strong. Orbit observations are</p>	

	<p>monitored on a daily basis and data is scrutinised across the 2 classes. Using on entry data children who will make Good Level of Development are identified and those children who are under attaining are identified and placed in intervention groups linked to their needs. Observations are used to inform planning and classroom challenges are high profile within the classes. Children in the Foundation Stage are aware of their next steps as they are challenged through conversation with adults, question prompt cards and challenges set. Throughout the whole academy pupils are aware of their targets and are fully involved in assessing their progress through clear levelled targets in their topic, Literacy and numeracy books, pupil interviews and marking feedback.</p> <p>Moderations occur frequently across the academy either in phase class or whole academy format all with the aim of verify levelling. The academy further make good use of their Academy links and their cross academy moderation ensures consistency. Staff pair up across the academy to identify children in specific groups e.g. Pupil Premium, summer boys, EAL and moderate the judgements given</p>	
<p>3 Target setting for the improvement of the school's performance in basic skills</p>	<p>Mersey Primary Academy have clear and embedded measures for target setting. The academy has a rigorous process of setting, monitoring and reviewing these realistic but challenging targets and there is a strong commitment to improving basic skills.</p> <p>The Sheffield STAT assessment grids to assess with life without levels are used effectively and realistic yet challenging individual targets are set which are then reviewed on a half termly basis through pupil progress meetings.</p> <p>All pupils work is moderated within academy to ensure accuracy in levelling and to allow a clear picture of progress to be painted and this is then taken to an academy and cluster level to further consolidate these judgements.</p> <p>A strength of Mersey Primary Academy is the strong commitment to meet the needs of all its learners; all teachers are fully aware of pupils requiring further support</p>	

	<p>and provide bespoke closing the gap sessions to meet the needs of all groups of children. Mersey Primary Academy are extremely effective at providing relevant bespoke teaching to meet the needs of every child.</p> <p>Indeed, all pupils are motivated to do well in their lessons and teachers ensure that pupils are aware of the areas they need to focus on. This is always done in a sensitive manner.</p>	
<p>4 Basic skills improvement planning for pupils underattaining and /or underachieving</p>	<p>Mersey Academy is effective and adept at providing personalised teaching to meet the needs of every child. The SEN leader is instrumental in ensuring pupils receive the personalised intervention they require through a clear awareness of all the pupils needs across the academy and careful use of resources and staff. She has re assessed the SEN register ascertaining and denoting the exact need of every child this has become a working document which is analysed and assessed regularly. Furthermore the SEN coordinator throughout the year engages in professional dialogue regarding SEN children either during pupil progress meetings or informally and any concerns which are raised are looked into and needs are met.</p> <p>Personal passports have been created to replace the old IEPs. These are written with involvement from both teachers, SEN action children within the class and parents to ensure they are part of their personal learning plan to ensure ownership. Rigorous monitoring by leaders includes regular pupil interviews, which are recorded, to ensure pupils are confident with their personal improvement plan. Teachers use the SEN 'red' folder to ensure they are planning to take necessary steps to allow the learner to reach their targets. The academy has regular meetings to ensure parents are fully aware of their child's needs and action to be undertaken and parents are invited to SEN action support planning alongside the teachers and SENCO to ensure there is a firm foundation of support for those individuals. Any impacts are shared with parents as well as contact</p>	

	<p>and support from outside agencies.</p> <p>Mersey Academy are extremely effective at identifying underattaining / underachieving children through the stringent assessment procedures and effective provision mapping clearly states needs which are addressed through external 'boost' sessions and Third space learning - each having programmes developed after diagnostic testing. These sessions are then recorded to review knowledge and skills learnt. Mersey further provide additional support in Reading for Pupil Premium, under-achievers, non-regular readers and differentiate the teaching of spelling strategies to support all needs.</p> <p>In addition to this, phonics is streamed from FS1 to Y3 and tailored to the needs of the children.</p> <p>Rigorous, tailored support through bespoke intervention groups take place and alter depending on need. Additionally recorded daily Closing the Gap afternoon sessions in all classes pin point children in all subjects, covering basic skills. The closing the gap sessions are excellent and are paramount in moving learning forward. Test data and daily assessment informs need and then teaching sessions are then planned around children's weaker areas in order to close the gap. These sessions usually take place in the afternoon and are delivered by trained teachers thus ensuring quality first teaching. In depth marking and rigorous assessment closes ensure progress is made. Those children that were previously SEN remain closely monitored and have Closing the Gap interventions by the class teacher if they are not making the required progress.</p> <p>Leaders also conduct half termly Pupil progress meetings with teachers to discuss targets and learning goals and necessary provision and next steps for intervention. Pupils identified for intervention are diagnostically tested and provided with a personalised learning plan to meet their individual needs.</p> <p>Parents are informed of progress through parent's evenings and reports. As well through social media. Twitter, class blogs and the academy website.</p>	
<p>5 Regular review of</p>	<p>Effective evaluation of data is evident and children's progress is reviewed termly. Eazmag data informs subject</p>	

<p>the progress made by pupils underattaining and /or underachieving in basic skills</p>	<p>leader's next steps on a half-termly basis and ADP's are updated. Governors are sent data graphs from the key year groups alongside KPI data forms to allow challenge meetings with the HOA and subject leaders.</p> <p>Half-termly pupil progress meetings take place with teachers reviewing Eazmag data to discuss targets, identifying pupils in need and putting in place clear next steps and appropriate provision.</p> <p>Effective provision mapping for all under attaining / under achieving pupils identified through the reading, writing and maths stars, clearly states needs which are addressed through external 'boost' sessions and Third space learning - each having programmes developed after diagnostic testing. These sessions are then recorded to review knowledge and skills learnt. Additionally recorded daily CTG pm sessions in all classes pin point children in all subjects, covering basic skills.</p> <p>The introduction of learning passports at Mersey has ensured that all children and adults involved have a partnership in understanding and providing provision for key knowledge and skills needed. Discussions with pupils are now a key part of monitoring and there is a bank of videos with pupils in where barriers, targets and next steps are discussed.</p>	
<p>6 A commitment to improving the skills of all staff to teach and extend basic skills</p>	<p>Mersey Academy is committed to improving the understanding, skills and knowledge of all staff in order to support and improve the development of basic skills. The needs, well being, welfare and development of all staff is considered of very high importance and it is clear to see that the Head teacher makes a conscious decision to invest in people. Training needs are always addressed with provision given and scrutinies, lesson observations and enquiries further identify CPD need.</p> <p>Indeed CPD, which is well organised, is differentiated and is reflective of the individual needs of the staff. It can be aimed at whole academy, cohort or individual levels thus meeting</p>	

the needs of all practitioners. There is a rigorous whole academy training programme in place. They are keen that both teaching staff and TAs be party to the training and as such have employed a higher level TA who then delivers the training to the TAs so they are up skilled there by more effective in their teaching.

The Academy offers CPD for all both in house and externally but the key is it must feed back into the academy and all staff have the responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of their CPD and feeding back to colleagues.

Mersey Academy, who have a strong approach to coaching and mentoring, utilise their own practitioners extremely effectively through the use of pedagogical pods (affectionately known as the pay it forward system.) Pedagogical pods are based on the premise of playing to the strengths within the academy with individual staff skills placed in a metaphorical pot. Informal support can be given in the form of marking pairs or a six week coaching and mentoring programme for in-lesson issues. A member of staff with an area for development will be observed by a member of staff with a strength in that area, who models a good lesson, through using appropriate resources and suggestions on how to extend the learning and they highlighting an area to work on. The recipient is then given time to practise before a follow up observation which allows them to showcase their new skills. The outcome determines the next action and is recorded with Bluesky. It is a purely supportive measure which has proved to be extremely successful seen from the work scrutinises and lesson observations which have followed such sessions. The academy have successfully created a nurturing and supportive environment where staff can learn from each other and support and share expertise across the academy and this is being developed across the cluster, thereby leading to an increase in standards. Seen most notably from the rise in teaching standards with 75% of lessons good and 11% outstanding.

Mersey Academy certainly effectively makes use of their Academy links, they are part of the School Partnership Trust and as part of this utilise Bluesky as a source for training provision, along with three other Academies in the city.

	<p>This partnership not only enables the academies to combine resources in order to offer quality training to all, in addition it places the academy at the forefront of up-to-date training. They are able to offer system leadership to other academies within the group.</p> <p>In conclusion, Mersey Academy's commitment to invest in their staff has had a big impact on teaching and learning across the academy and has enabled staff to secure achievement for all by embedding basic skills across the academy.</p>	
<p>7 The use of a range of teaching approaches and learning styles to improve basic skills</p>	<p>Mersey Academy is an extremely resourceful and one of its many strengths is empowering its pupils to be independent learners who can achieve success and fundamentally instilling them with self belief. One key way they achieve this is through promoting enterprise and using this as a key way to improve basic skills. This is done at a whole academy, class and independent level. At an independent level all the children, who have one of the many jobs in academy from head boy and girl to accountant, running the prize shop or cleaning the tables at lunchtime, must apply for their jobs with a proper application form with two referees and have an a searching interview. They are paid a salary through the a credit system which translates to a variety of prizes. This is open to all learners. At a class level the academy had a Hull Fair day where every class received a budget of £10 and had to design, create, market then sell a product. This was embraced by all classes and fuelled by fierce competition. Foundation Stage two came out victorious. Through this process the children were acquiring basic skills at every level whilst nurturing their entrepreneurial sides. The Academy now will run a similar event in the Spring and Summer term. At a whole academy level the Academy has been nominated for best newcomer award at Hull PESS.</p> <p>Added to the enterprising approach there are a variety of different teaching approaches used at Mersey to engage children which include; table prompts, cross cluster learning videos (ICT), structure carousel activities, Bloom's deeper thinking kits are several examples of daily approaches.</p> <p>Across the academy the hard working atmosphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure teachers are providing modelled examples of writing in all books.

and diligence is apparent with children on task in every classroom. The high attendance rates, 97%, in reflects the children's desire to be in school and access the wide ranging curriculum and learning taking place.

The Chris Quigley topic based approach to learning is especially exciting. Each Phase works together to plan and teach a topical topic which the children are interested in. The success of Mersey's topic based approach lies with the closely adhered to belief that the creativity must be transferred to create quality productivity which is basic skills rich and a close examination of the topic books (which were of an extremely high standard) demonstrated this to be the case.

The eight day writing cycle has been a real strength and the improvement in writing has been substantial with level 4 writing rising from 79 % in 2014 to 95% in 2015 and similarly level 5 from 26% in 2014 to 40% in 2015. The cycle which begins with a cold write, followed by an intensive read, then moves to the teaching of writing techniques and grammar fitting to that genre, then a warm write, an edit and improvements session and finally a hot write, has ultimately created a structure where the children receive focused teaching on how to create, hone and improve their written skills, as a whole school approach it is understood by all

Closing the Gap Quality First Teaching

The most current, successful ICT packages are deployed successfully and use these programmes in reading, writing and maths on a daily basis in order to promote the consolidation of basic skills. Children are provided with Purple Mash and MyMaths homework along with the opportunity to access the blog at school and home. Twitter is used regularly to link with the cluster schools in order to share resources and ideas.

There are systematic monitoring procedures in place to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the consistent rigorous monitoring programme planned out every half term ensures all areas are frequently revisited and rapid progress can be made.

	<p>Learners are involved in assessing their own progress and this is achieved through children being actively encouraged to reflect upon their learning in all areas. The marking system, which is exceptionally detailed, is followed consistently by all staff throughout the academy and the children understand and have ownership of it.</p> <p>Moreover, pupil interviews inform impact and success.</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>The use of appropriate teaching and learning materials and learning environments</p>	<p>Recently refurbished to a high standard, Mersey Primary Academy have invested time, money and training in order to provide a quality first teaching and learning environment with the development of basic skills lying at the very heart.</p> <p>The environment is clean, clear cut and focused towards learning. Every display has a purpose; either to aid learning or showcase achievement.</p> <p>The displays in the main hall showcase the caring, enterprising and secure environment the academy have created and within this it is apparent exactly how learners are developing emotionally, socially and academically. The five Rs which the Academy adhere to of; Resourcefulness, Resilience, Relationship, Reflective, and Responsible - soon to be changed to Risk taking- are prominent as is the Community awards display where the reading, writing, maths and handwriting awards stand proud. The attendance display - a pictogram which reflects the leading class - reflects importance the academy places on attendance.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are displays which showcase the trips to London and the residential trip which are text rich and demonstrate the positive impact on learning the trips create.</p> <p>The academy is extremely enterprising and the learning environment clearly reflects this. They follow the good to be green behaviour system and this is facilitated by the credit system. Children can earn credits for good behaviour, for acts of kindness, punctuality and also pupils with academy jobs (such as lunchtime jobs or councillors) receive a salary. It is worth noting the children have to apply for any jobs and provide referees and the interview process is taken very seriously. These credits make points and the children can trade their points for prizes and there is a shop,</p>	

again run by pupils, where children can trade their points. It is an effective system and all the more remarkable as it is run solely by children. It is teaching the children all important life skills and empowering them to be independent, resourceful thinkers. In line with this the academy had a Hull Fair day where every class received a budget of £10 and had to design, create, market then sell a product. A display mirrors the success of this scheme where all children were involved and competition was rife. Through this the children were acquiring basic skill at every level whilst nurturing their entrepreneurial sides. It is no surprise the academy have been nominated for the best newcomer award at Hull PESS.

Whilst every classroom is distinct in character there is also a uniformity of good displays of non negotiables which aid learning. All classrooms have English and Maths working walls that are text rich and promote learning and are dedicated to the promotion of basic skills. English working walls encompass the 8-day writing cycle. Furthermore, each has a SPAG display, spellings of the week and a speech and language display. The academy are focusing on reading for pleasure and as such there is a reading for pleasure area in each classroom.

Displays in the Foundation Stage have been developed to identify development. Eg name writing or scissor control (Funky fingers) and counting on. Examples are displayed which are then linked to statements from development matters.

The outdoor area has been utilised effectively with a science garden and a well resourced outdoor area in the foundation stage where there are natural resources such as crates and boxes in line with the early excellence principals of using resources which will facilitate the children imagination.

The academy has invested a good deal of money on quality reading materials, and the classrooms and library are now well resourced with good reading materials and excellent guided reading books which reflect the different needs of learners. It is evident from walking round the academy the value placed on reading in order to

	<p>promote basic skills.</p> <p>Resources used to support teaching and learning are of good quality and well maintained and are used appropriately according to the needs of different groups.</p> <p>ICT is constantly used in a focused way and there are iPads for all staff and pupils which has allowed ICT to be incorporated into all curriculum areas, as well as two standard PCs in each classroom. Bug Club is used to support the teaching of reading strategies.</p> <p>Mersey Primary Academy have given much careful thought to their learning environment and the children understand this seen from the way they in turn treat their surroundings. The pupils are secure in their environment which ultimately they respect and care for.</p>	
<p>9</p> <p>The involvement of parents and / or carers in developing their child's basic skills</p>	<p>On their website Mersey Primary Academy claim to be; "working in partnership with our families to enable learners to develop" This forward thinking statement demonstrates perfectly just how much Mersey really values parents and the community as partners in their children's learning. The well thought through and extensive measures they have in place to include and involve parents reflect this.</p> <p>They strive to keep parents informed about their child's learning and progress at every level through a variety of means such as inviting parents into school to participate in activities such as: Stay and read sessions or the Foundation stage days where parents perform joint observations. Workshops for parents. Furthermore, they also hold open days for enterprise: Hull Fair comes to Mersey, Christmas Fayre, Harvest and Easter Services to name a few.</p> <p>The website, which is easy to navigate round, is exciting and enticing and the plethora of colourful, active photographs allows parents to visualise learning. This combined with Twitter - which is used to engage parents - class blogs and texts to parents is a powerful medium of communication and understanding. The academy still make effective use of traditional notice boards and newsletters Furthermore, the parents receive an annual report; details of key text and topic plans being sent home; parental packs;, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to develop and enhance the community links and showcase the growing confidence and ability of the school.

parent questionnaires.

Every Tuesday morning there is a parent voice drop in session where parents are listened to and their ideas valued. These are well attended and have many regulars, however for some parents school can be a daunting place which holds bad memories; this in turn creates barriers and the academy work hard to overcome. The head has an open door policy for these parents inviting them in on a one to one basis so they feel valued.

The academy also provides emotional support through a well being officer who meets regularly with vulnerable children who can be identified by their parents or teachers, to deal with issues such as bereavement. This is a valuable asset because if children are unhappy they are not receptive to learning. The officer is there for ad hoc drop ins when a child requests it or through more formal support where relationships are built and trust established. Both serving to provide all important emotional support for every child that needs it. Whilst the officer is there for the children, in addition to this, she further helps parents through supporting them with issues such as deprivation, debt or behavioural problems of their child. It is another example of the close links Mersey forges with parents demonstrating the academy's commitment to ensuring the emotional wellbeing of the children so all can access the learning being delivered.

It is clear home school, links are firmly embedded and staff work hard to ensure they are maintained.

Mersey are also reaching out to the community, they have forged links with the food bank and consolidated the links with the church and local play groups and sure start. The impact of this is already being felt with the increased number of places in the nursery, rising from 23 to 31.

<p>10</p> <p>An effective procedure for monitoring, planning and assessing improvement in basic skills performance</p>	<p>Mersey Academy have a strong EAB - an Educational Advisory Body, which runs in the same way as a governing body with a chair, vice chair and link governors. There is also a federated EAB for the cluster academies and each head is a governor for one of the sister academies thus ensuring good string unified leadership. Governance at Mersey Academy is strong. All governors have had training and understand the aims of the academy following the last OFSTED. Furthermore, the EAB have challenge meetings set around Academy development areas. They are sent data graphs from the key year groups to discuss and hold discussions termly on the progress, alongside KPI data forms to allow Governors to challenge and question HOA and subject leaders.</p> <p>Other external viewpoints are highly valued and external reviews in the academy and questions raised from this leads to whole academy hypothesis and analysis.</p> <p>There is an admirable, robust timetable of monitoring to ensure standards in raising basic skills are maintained and this is a clear strength of the academy. It occurs frequently both internally between classes and the academy further make good use of their cluster links with cross cluster moderation ensuring consistency.</p> <p>All stakeholders are informed about the academy's performance in basic skills through the website, twitter, class blogs and texts to parents as well as making effective use of traditional notice boards and newsletters. Furthermore, the parents receive an annual report; details of key text and topic plans being sent home; parental packs; and parent questionnaires . The children have a clear voice through the school council, the Head boy and Girl, questionnaires and informal discussions.</p>	
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Additional Comments (if applicable)

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To continue to develop and enhance the community links and showcase the growing confidence and ability of the academy.
- To ensure teachers are providing modelled examples of writing in all books.