



Leading Parent Partnership Award

Final Verification Report

School	Thomas Gray Primary School
Address	Chesnut Grove Bootle Merseyside L20 4LU
Headteacher	Mrs Rachael Rimmer
LPPA Co-ordinator (if different)	Olivia Ball
Date Of Assessment	7 th May 2014
Verifier	Maureen Nash

Commentary On The Specific Objectives Which Formed Part Of The Final Verification

Evidence was extremely well organised by the LPPA coordinator with clear evidence for each KPI. This was well supported by a detailed discussion with the head teacher and coordinator which included a vision for on-going development on the strong parental involvement in evidence. This discussion was extremely comprehensive with verbal and written information on their vision for parental involvement, how each objective was met and on impact of LPPA. A tour of the school and meetings with several groups including pupils, staff, governors, high school staff & parents also provided additional valuable evidence and insight into the school.

An outstanding piece of evidence was on the website. Over the whole 18 month period of the LPPA project, under a designated LPPA section, the school gave updates on initiatives and activities with feedback and actions on parental consultation. This was the first time the Adviser had seen such communication on LPPA with the school community.

The head teacher had made significant improvements within the school with a clear vision for increasing parental engagement. LPPA had assisted them to re-evaluate several aspects of engagement.

The range of excellent evidence has been put together to show that the school is meeting all the Objectives and Key Performance Indicators, this gives a clear picture of how LPPA has further developed the involvement of parents and other carers in the school.

Objectives 1 and 2: There was evidence of staff, parents, governors and outside agency's involvement throughout the LPPA process. There were minutes and actions of a diverse Working Party, comprising of male and female teachers, Pastoral Officer, governor, parent, TAs, ICT technician and Nurture based teacher. Meetings had agreed actions and the coordinator provided updates to all parties, with the action plan being used excellently as a working document.

Objective 3: The walk round the school building showed very attractive displays to both celebrate and scaffold learning and there were photographs of happy children and of parents sharing learning with their child. The reception area has been thoughtfully designed and the Pastoral Officer provides a wonderful welcome. The grounds showed opportunities for pupils & parents to be involved in activities with areas devoted to gardens. A range of communications is in very user friendly formats and the clear, informative website is an integral part of this.

Objective 4 and 5: There was extensive evidence to show activities to support both the parents own learning and parent and child enrichment. There is a programme of events with year groups targeted throughout the year and one-off practical workshops have also proved popular. These have been run by both school and outside agencies, including Maths Makes Sense, Read Write Inc.; Fruity Faces and craft workshops. Parents have benefitted from a wide range of adult learning opportunities.

Objective 6: Evidence showed a clear induction process for both nursery and reception pupils, including a meeting, induction pack and workshops. Parents take their child into class every morning and support settling in. Information and expectations were communicated and two-way communication was encouraged with parents providing information to support a smooth move.

Objective 7: Parents gain information on their child's progress through three consultation evenings and an annual written report, with tracking information provided termly. Other staff than class teachers are available for discussion on consultation evenings, including high school staff, SENCo, Nurture teacher and senior leaders. Parents share their child's success, for example with certificates and celebration assemblies.

Objective 8: Key policy documents are in place and the prospectus and website provide helpful information. Recently some more accessible policy guidelines have been developed. Parental comment from questionnaires was responded to and actions taken.

Objective 9: The school has close contact with the high school that most pupils transfer to and their staff attend Thomas Gray events and invite pupils there and parents are encouraged to attend. Other high schools are beginning to forge links.

Objective 10: A range of evaluation evidence was provided that highlighted aspects of consultation with pupils and parents and the impact of school activities. There was clear evidence of parents' confidence in the school. Collation of evaluative evidence has been excellent throughout the LPPA objectives and will continue to be used to indicate areas of future developments.

Strengths Identified In The Review

- The head teacher has a strong, clear vision to develop effective partnerships between home and school in support of improved attainment, achievement and attendance of pupils and quality of life for children and parents. A full range of new initiatives has been introduced and strong leadership has facilitated improvements in order to 'Raise parental involvement as a priority' (head).
- The LPPA co-ordinator has been pivotal in the development and improvement of parental involvement. Her exemplary approach has shown a commitment to parents and the community, along with management and organisational skills and a whole school approach.
- The school values LPPA both as a celebration of existing good practice in parental involvement and as a reflective focus to develop this even further. Rigorous self-evaluation has produced a clear action plan which was systematically and carefully monitored and openly shared with the school community, using the LPPA framework as a tool to support the process.
- Thomas Gray is a very welcoming school, both with the physical environment and staff attitude demonstrated by 100% of parents saying they felt welcome. 'The feel you get in this school is one of welcoming' (High School Deputy Head).
- Regular formal & informal consultation with parents about school practice has been developed ensuring that parents' views were being heard and acted upon. An evaluative approach has been adopted throughout the LPPA period and parents and the school community have had feedback and actions through newsletters and the website. Thomas Gray certainly puts 'We Asked, You Said, We Did' into practice.
- There is wide range of communication strategies utilised by the school. The use of email, texting, user friendly newsletters, parent noticeboards around school and personal contact was particularly valued by parents. The attractive re-launched website uses accessible language to provide information both to support children's learning and about school life in general.
- Parents, staff and governors clearly value that staff are approachable, 'You can sense a shift in the openness of the school' (Governor).
- Pupil representatives had a clear understanding of how their own and other parents were involved in the school, and the importance of the contribution they were making. Pupils talked with particular enthusiasm about activities their parents enjoyed in school and good communications.
- School works hard to help parents support their child's learning. There is a wide range of workshops with this aim and learning challenges, reading/homework bags and homework projects also promote home-school learning. Parents have improved their own learning with courses and some have progressed to qualifications and/or employment within the school.
- School uses a range of ideas to encourage parental participation in workshops and events, for example using pupil involvement, a personal approach, free books, crèche if required and tempting refreshments. In this way a full range of opportunities for parents to support their own and their child's learning is offered.
- A PTA has started during the LPPA process, facilitating parental engagement in informal school activities. This, alongside the provision of workshops, courses and drop-ins has facilitated parents having peer support.
- Both staff and parents value that school meets the individual needs of pupils and their families, with the phrase 'It's more than a school', used by staff, governors and parents. The Nurture group and counsellor particularly support more vulnerable families.

Areas For Further Development

The following areas were agreed between the Verifier and the LPPA Coordinator:

- To extend the use of technology to support communication, for example using twitter and class blogs.
- To provide termly curriculum information on core subjects for parents, perhaps through class

booklets.

- To continue to embed existing good practice in facilitating parental engagement and involvement.

Recommendation By The Team

That the school should be awarded the LPPA for a period of three years.

Headteacher Comment

May we use your comments on our website and/or publicity material? Yes/No