



Jersey Schools Review Framework – Independent Report of d’Auvergne School

La Pouquelaye
St Helier
Jersey
JE2 3GF

Headteacher: Sam Cooper
Review date: 11 - 13 June 2024

Summary

d’Auvergne is a happy school where children thrive. Exceptionally strong relationships between staff and pupils, and between the school and parents, are at the heart of the school’s success. In the words of one parent: ‘The school is very much a family with a strong community spirit.’

Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and around the school. They are proud of their school and are keen to contribute to school life. d’Auvergne is a very inclusive school where the rich variety of children’s cultural backgrounds is celebrated and pupils who have additional needs get the right level of support.

Highly effective leadership has galvanised staff at all levels into an impressive team that shares a clear ambition for pupils to achieve their best. Many positive initiatives have been introduced which are successfully promoting pupils’ learning. Senior leaders recognise that it would be useful to have a clearer overview of the various initiatives.

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 they have acquired the skills and knowledge which prepare them very well for secondary school. Pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their various starting points. Those needing extra help benefit from excellent support to help them catch up with their peers. A particularly impressive oracy programme runs across the school. Pupils’ learning is also enriched by a remarkable range of after-school clubs, trips, and visits.

High-quality teaching ensures that pupils enjoy coming to school and that they are keen to learn. Teachers typically have high expectations, planning and delivering lessons which enable all groups of pupils learn well. Learning is less secure in a few lessons where there is not enough focus on what pupils are expected to learn and teachers do not check sufficiently how well pupils understand the work. The school benefits from having several teachers who are subject specialists, for example in music, design technology, art and French, where pupils’ achievement is especially high. In Key Stage 2, pupils make less progress in science, geography and history and more priority needs to be given to promoting similarly high achievement in these subjects.

Full report

Achievement

- When children join the Nursery, typically a high proportion are below the expected level of development for their age. Assessment is used very effectively to identify those children who need additional support with their speech and language development. The individual programmes used with multilingual learners are especially effective in helping them make strong progress in developing their acquisition of English.
- During Reception, children make strong progress in developing their reading, writing and number work. They also learn to build positive relationships with other children, taking turns, and sharing materials with each other.
- Given some previous underperformance, the school has had a major focus on the teaching of reading and writing which has had a significant impact on raising pupils' attainment. Now, a greater proportion than in the past reach expected levels for their age.
- Pupils learn and apply their phonics skills well due to the consistent teaching of a recognised scheme. They love reading, and enjoy accessing the library and working with the school story teller in the playground.
- Pupils' writing has benefitted from a new approach based on the study of key texts. Samples of pupils' work and of their writing journals show pupils are making marked progress over time. Books are well presented and writing shows pupils cover a variety of topics, including poetry, creative writing, diaries and responses to literature. Pupils who have fallen behind make rapid progress due to the excellent additional support they receive in small withdrawal groups.
- Pupils make highly impressive progress in developing their oracy because it is a focus in all classes across the school and in special events such as 'Talk Tuesday.' Pupils learn to take turns and listen, routinely discussing in pairs or small groups. They also rehearse the skills necessary to make presentations to wider audiences. In discussion with adults, pupils present as articulate and confident young people.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics has fluctuated in recent years but the school's data and evidence in pupils' books show an increasing number are now reaching expected levels. Pupils with high prior attainment achieve well due to challenging extension activities in lessons. Some of these pupils in Year 6 benefit from additional mathematics lessons taught by teachers from a local secondary school.
- Pupils who have complex cognitive and language needs and attend the specialist 'Futures' additional resource centres (ARCs) are making appropriate gains in their learning from their various starting points. Some are developing their social awareness, learning to recognise they are part of a wider group and to express preferences using pictures and symbols. Others learn to take turns, follow routines independently, articulate their feelings with the aid of signed support, and recognise key words.
- Pupils benefit from a broad, interesting and enriching curriculum which incorporates the Jersey Curriculum. The 'Makerspace' project is effective in developing pupils' scientific enquiry, computing and design technology skills. However, pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding, and their knowledge of history and geography, is limited by the limited time allocated to these subjects in the curriculum.
- Pupils develop an appreciation of music through taking part in choirs and by learning a musical instrument. Also, attractive displays around the school demonstrate pupils' accomplishment in art.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by the exceptional range of clubs, trips and visits. Pupils really enjoy these activities which are well organised and attended. Activities often build

on pupils' learning in the classroom; for example, in drama, sports, gardening and homework clubs.

Behaviour, personal development and welfare

- A relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere exists throughout the school where pupils follow routines with minimal direction from adults. Pupils work well together, make friends and are polite to adults. d'Auvergne is an inclusive school where pupils feel valued and their uniqueness is celebrated. Pupils enjoy coming to school and flourish in the extremely caring and stimulating environment. In the words of one pupil, 'This is a kind school.'
- Pupils behave extremely well because they are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and are coached to understand the impact of their actions on others. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes demonstrate high levels of well-being and engagement and respond well to adult direction. Pupils with additional needs who occasionally display anxious behaviour are supported patiently and consistently to manage their behaviour and emotions.
- The school is extremely successful in promoting pupils' personal development and in raising their self-esteem. Several initiatives promote pupils' emotional and social development, including Forest School where small group learning takes place in the outdoors, and the oracy programme which plays a significant part in boosting pupils' self-confidence.
- Pupils are really proud of their school and are keen to participate fully in school life. As they move up the school pupils take on increasing levels of responsibility. For example through the school council, the rights respecting team, being a library monitor or looking after the school environment.
- Pupils' efforts and achievements are recognised in many ways. These include, through the termly Achievement Shield, weekly certificates, awards, house points and 'Well Done!' notes. Evidence of pupils' achievements is highly visible around the school.
- The school has won wider recognition for its work, winning awards for the environmental conservation, gardening, and keeping children fit and healthy.
- Pupils speak respectfully about different faiths and cultures. Their knowledge is extended through the religious education curriculum, displays of different faiths and cultures around the school, world religions day in assembly, and well-attended cultural evenings.
- A comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme ensures pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. This is supported by such activities as pupils growing vegetables in the school garden and participation in the 'Move More Jersey' fitness initiative.
- Effective systems for recording behaviour are well-established. Incidents of bullying are rare and where this happens staff respond appropriately, meeting parents of both the bully and the victim.
- Attendance figures are slightly above the Island average. Unauthorised attendance is higher, but can largely be attributed to families choosing to holiday in school time.
- Robust systems are in place for monitoring attendance and there is clear evidence to show the success of the school's interventions.
- Staff work together to ensure that all pupils are kept safe from harm. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and trust adults to support them if they have a problem.
- All the relevant policies and procedures are in place to promote pupils' welfare, including an intimate care policy for pupils with the most complex needs. The site is well cared for

and exceptionally well managed. The Health and Safety committee meets regularly and minutes demonstrate the very strong practice that is in place.

Effectiveness of teaching

- Teachers typically have high expectations of what all groups of pupils can achieve. From the moment children arrive in Nursery and Reception they are taught how to cooperate with each other and to follow school routines.
- Lessons generally progress at a brisk pace and contain interesting topics. As a result, pupils become enthusiastic learners and work hard.
- Teachers usually give clear demonstrations of what pupils are expected to learn. This often goes beyond simply showing pupils how to do a task. For example, teachers model reading and give pupils immediate opportunities to echo and improve their own fluency or expression, or they model the use of clear sentence openers for discussion and debate, which pupils increasingly use without prompting.
- The school adopts a very structured and consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Teachers maintain fidelity to the adopted approach to teaching phonics to younger children and pupils. In Key Stage 2, the different components of reading are broken down and struggling readers are given targeted support according to their needs.
- Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding. They think carefully about what questions they are asking and who they want to answer. Pupils are given time to think and answer. Pupils and staff are patient when the answer becomes extended, listening carefully to the explanation that has been offered.
- A wide range of assessment strategies is being used to help teachers check pupils' understanding and to adjust the lesson as it progresses. Occasionally, lessons can become overcomplicated blurring the focus on the most critical learning.
- Well-targeted and designed interventions are of a very high quality. Pupils are carefully assessed and the activities are focused on their identified needs or gaps. The teaching is precise, and delivered in clear manageable steps.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly assured. While there has been some focus on subjects other than English and mathematics, there is scope for more subject-specific knowledge in subjects like science, history and geography to tackle remaining inconsistencies and weaknesses. The knowledge of specialist subject teachers is very strong.
- Pupils are given clear written and verbal feedback on how to improve their work. However, checking that suggestions have been followed up is too inconsistent.
- The school is also promoting strategies for pupils to assess their own work, to which most respond well; although too often pupils do not learn how to correct misconceptions.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported by both teachers, support assistants and keyworkers. This support takes a variety of forms according to need. It often includes visual prompts, pictorial timetables, 'now and next' boards as well as symbols and pictures to reinforce understanding of a topic. Tasks are often broken down into small steps so pupils can access the lesson. Keyworkers in the ARC use signing effectively to aid pupils' communication. Occasionally, pupils who struggle would benefit from being prepared in advance for what might be expected in a lesson to help them make a fuller contribution.
- Staff in the ARCs have a close understanding of each pupil's individual needs and adapt activities accordingly. Staff recognise the need to introduce a system for assessing and recording pupils' small gains in learning and are exploring options. They provide a broad range of activities which promote pupils' independence, sensory awareness and social

development. This includes cookery, swimming and horse riding. The use of pupils' experiences at home to reinforce learning in school is underdeveloped.

- The early years classes are set out well to support learning with open access to both natural and man-made resources. Outside learning environments in both the Nursery and Reception have a good range of equipment to promote children's physical development and to develop their creativity and imaginative play. This includes a nature area and a small music room. There are relatively few examples of numbers and letters being displayed in a focussed way to reinforce learning.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- The headteacher is highly visible around the school and embodies the school's caring ethos. He is ably supported by a strong and enthusiastic leadership team that is committed to the school's continual improvement.
- Evidence from a cycle of subject reviews, alongside the regular analysis of assessment information on pupils' progress, gives leaders a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Improvements in reading, writing and oracy demonstrate the successful impact of subsequent actions.
- The number and role of middle leaders has been expanded recently. Subject leaders are involved in the close monitoring of pupils' learning through lesson observations, book scrutiny, learning walks and discussions with pupils. They have drafted very appropriate plans to further extend pupils' learning in their subjects. As a next step, senior leaders recognise that these plans could usefully be combined to provide an overview of the different school priorities with a timeline for completion.
- The professional development of staff at all levels is closely linked to improving the quality of the curriculum and building leadership capacity.
- The school organisation reflects a creative deployment of staff to utilise their strengths and to ensure the efficient operation of the school. Additional funding is well-targeted and aligned closely with school priorities.
- Staff at all levels receive a high level of training and professional development. A relatively large number of teachers who are starting out in the profession joined the school at the beginning of the academic year. They have benefitted from a comprehensive programme of support which is having a significant impact. Each teacher works closely with a very experienced mentor who provides advice and also often works alongside them to demonstrate effective practice.
- There is a very strong staff team. Morale is extremely high due to the importance leadership places on staff wellbeing. Many staff participate in after-school social and fund-raising events alongside parents.
- The school is extremely successful at including parents in the life of the school. In the words of one parent, 'This is a fantastic school with excellent staff and a committed headteacher.' The headteacher has also been very effective in engaging the wider community to support the work of the school.
- Safeguarding procedures at the school are comprehensive and robust with relationships firmly at the centre of the school's approach. All records are up to date and contain detailed evidence of events and actions.
- The safeguarding lead is knowledgeable and experienced and is driven to ensure the best outcomes for the school's most vulnerable families. Both parents and staff have easy access to her and pupils value the support she provides.

- All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training through online and annual face-to-face sessions. Short, regular briefings are also used to remind staff of best practice and the safeguarding lead will also provide advice on specific issues that may arise. All staff are required to read the recent guidance and sign once they have done so. Further training for Prevent and FGM awareness were identified for action in the recent safeguarding audit and this is being organised.

Recommendations

The school should take the following actions:

1. Improve teaching and learning by:
 - making sure that the learning outcomes in lessons are always made clear
 - improving consistency amongst teachers in the use of assessment to check how well pupils understand a topic, and in the giving of advice on how pupils might improve their work
 - completing plans to strengthen the assessment and recording of progress for pupils with the most complex special educational needs, which combines pupils' experiences both at home and in school.
 - reviewing classroom displays and the outdoor environment in the early years so that they maximise opportunities to reinforce children's learning.
2. Improve pupils' learning in science, history and geography by improving teachers' subject knowledge and by giving more time to these subjects in the timetable.
3. Review the school's development planning in order to give a clearer oversight of priorities, by pulling together the many initiatives into an overarching plan that contains a timeline with milestones for completion.

Information about the school

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll: 419

Headteacher: Sam Cooper

School telephone number: 01534625858

School website: www.dauvergne.sch.ie

Contextual information

- The school has a nursery provision and 14 classes. There are two classes in each year group and an additional class in Years 3 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for Jersey Premium funding in 2023 was 34% which is higher than the average for all Jersey mainstream schools.
- About a third of pupils are multi-lingual learners, which is slightly higher than the Jersey average.
- 15% of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities which is similar to other Jersey schools.
- The school has two Additional Resource Centres (ARCs) for pupils who have additional learning needs associated with cognition and language.

Information about the review

The review team visited lessons in all classes across the school, sometimes alongside the headteacher. The team also visited lessons taught by specialist subject teachers and some small group classes for pupils needing extra help. Breakfast club and a sample of after-school clubs were also visited.

Reviewers observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at break and lunchtime and around the school. They heard pupils read, talked to groups of pupils about their work and life at the school and scrutinised a sample of their books.

Discussions were held with senior leaders, other staff who had an area of responsibility, a group of early career teachers and a small number of parents.

A wide range of documents including school improvement plans, data on pupils' progress and policies relating to safeguarding and pupils' welfare, health and safety were reviewed.

The review team

The review was led by an experienced off-Island reviewer and consisted of a total of five reviewers.

Enquiries about this report should be addressed to Head School Improvement & Advisory Service, Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Highlands Campus, PO Box 142, St Saviour, Jersey JE4 8QJ.