

Quality Mark Report

Quality Recognition Meeting took place on 17th July 2018, attended by following scrutineers:

Matthew Sims, Luton Virtual School headteacher – Educational Expert

Pascale Vassie, NRCSE Executive Director – Governance Expert

Observational visits performed on 1 and 14 July 2018 by:

Ertanch Hidayettin, Quality Development Consultant, NRCSE

Name of Supplementary School:

Luton & Dunstable Tamil Aalayam School

Membership No.:

NRC1739

Introduction

Luton & Dunstable Tamil Aalayam is a Tamil School with over 75 pupils aged 4-18. The school provides instruction for students from Paalar vaguppu (reception) to A-level Tamil. All of teachers have qualified in teaching Tamil, and many students from the school have taken both GCSE and A Level Tamil and received excellent grades.

The school also provides Barathanatyam classes for all students, from Grade one all the way to Diploma grade (grade 8). Each Barathanatyam student will be sent for examination if they wish to take a grade. Volunteer students who have taken their Barathanatyam grades are currently being trained to teach Barathanatyam. Carnatic Music classes (vocal) are also available for those interested, as well as Mridangam Classes.

Luton & Dunstable Tamil Aalayam operates on Sundays from 08:50 am to 1:30 pm.

Clearly a very friendly local community organisation that continues to strive and expand its programme and offering to the Tamil community.

Key recommendations from observation and recognition meeting

- Your teaching team and class structure is clear but the school is offering too many activities for 1 ½ hours operation. Careful planning for expansion with financial growth to permit larger premises to be secured will enable the delivery of the comprehensive programme that you aspire to.
- Your student progress booklet is clear and attractive – more evidence of formative learner assessment and differentiation would be an area to focus on.
- The move to new premises is good but at the time of assessment the space used for some classes was not entirely suitable. When the anticipated relocation to larger rooms take place this should make a highly positive impact.

Please list any outstanding achievements:

- The school has made a highly promising start with a good teaching team and clear lesson structure.
- Parents and staff are evidently committed and very enthusiastic about the school and committed to the growth of excellent provision to provide the best opportunities for young people to learn about their heritage, culture and mother tongue

Detail of findings overall from observation and recognition meeting

1. Create an effective learning environment

The school has recently moved to a 6th Form college and benefits from modern classroom facilities with access to whiteboards and computers. There is access to outside play and sports areas. At the time of the visit some classes were taking place in the corridor temporarily but should be relocated to a larger open space in the following academic year. Access to purpose-built dance classes is also anticipated. This should have a significant positive impact on provision. Behaviour is good and staff roles clear.

2. Teach effectively

Pupils are grouped according to language skills with exams in June of each year. For language tuition class sizes are small, average eight children, and excellent teacher/pupil relationships were observed. Clear schemes of work were evident and detailed lesson plans relating to the TEDC UK provision for pupils taking Tamil language exams. Lesson plans could usefully have fewer aims to ensure successful achievement can be easily recorded each week. Teachers are qualified and well supported by the management team.

3. Record progress and achievement

Each child has a student progress booklet which is attractive and clearly laid out. A simple progress card has been devised to follow each pupil from year 1 through to year 10. This has been implemented for three classes so far. Annual exams provide external assessment of achievement in language and music. A wider range of teaching methods and more differentiated activities to ensure all children are engaged and enjoying classes could be usefully developed.

4. Choose the right resources

Curriculum books linked to the centralised provision are good. Festivals are incorporated into the teaching and very interactive events with parents involved take place three times a year. Whiteboards/ICT are available in the classrooms but not in the corridor space where three classes are taking place.

5. Plan and develop your organisation - Advanced

Excellent staff and management structure. Responsibilities and roles are clear with good management lines. A headteacher oversees the whole school with deputy head focused on governance and assistant head responsible for the 10 language teachers. Planning is excellent and success of the school within just two years evidences this. Management members not involved in teaching are able to be objective. Student evaluation forms have been collected although evidence of how these have informed school development is not yet clear.

6. Select and support staff and volunteers

Good staff training programme on all policies and procedures of school. Clear, comprehensive slides seen which have also been used to inform parents. References are taken up for all staff. Clear list of responsibilities for all aspects of the school including testing, lesson planning, curriculum planning, finance, visitors, etc. Designated Child Protection Officer linked in to LSCB

7. Make sure children are safe

Good parents' information pack with Code of Conduct. Staff Code of Conduct and core principals very clear. Staff handbook includes classroom discipline, appropriate teaching techniques and information about the different needs of children at different ages. Comprehensive Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures. Currently waiting to complete Luton's S11 Safeguarding requirements for supplementary schools.

8. Manage finances

Financial policies clear. All staff are volunteers except the fine arts teachers. Small fixed contribution made annually towards expenses. It would be better to reimburse actual expenses and certainly the £100 p/a limited should not be increased in this form. Expenditure over the last year exceeded the income as a result of the premises move. Funds currently cover the rental of two classrooms, funding evidently needs to be achieved to increase this.