

## Quality Mark Report

Quality Recognition Meeting took place on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019, attended by following scrutineers:

**Matthew Sims**, Luton Virtual School headteacher – Educational Expert

**Pascale Vassie**, NRCSE Executive Director – Governance Expert

Observational visits performed on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2018 by:

**Ertanch Hidayettin**, Quality Development Consultant, NRCSE

Name of Supplementary School:

**Polish Community School in Luton**

Membership No.:

**NRC0310**

### Introduction

Established in 1953 by refugees wanting to ensure their children retained Polish language, the aim of the Polish Community School is to enable pupils from Luton, Dunstable and surrounding areas to learn the Polish language, literature, history, traditions, culture, etc. and to grow up into young adults proud of their ancestral roots, aware of the spiritual richness that the diversity of two cultures will bestow upon them.

The school, which is entirely staffed by volunteers, strives to prepare its 452 pupils to successfully sit public GCSE and A Level examinations in the Polish language. Their aims are also to support the achievement of children and young people in their education and other aspects of their lives so that they can integrate fully into the local cultural environment and British society.

School activities include 35 Saturdays of classroom-based learning, plus educational trips, spelling competitions, school choir and three football teams. The Polish Community School works in partnership with local schools such as Downside School and the Bedfordshire Police Service.

### Key recommendations from observation and recognition meeting

- The staffing structure, support of teachers, management of the school and safeguarding of its pupils are all very strong and the pupil number bear testimony to this. That you are able to support so many children with a relatively small budget is impressive. However, management committee members are advised to review the organisational structure. An important next step for the school would be to become a CIO (charitable incorporated organisation) or at least to incorporate as a Ltd Company.

### Please list any outstanding achievements:

- Excellent teaching – very thorough and clearly planned. Excellent use of a local primary school including full use of IT facilities and resources. Clearly a strong working relationship.
- Very impressive structure to teaching with tailored curriculum for children learning Polish as a heritage/second language. Regular CPD for teachers.
- Very active in Luton in 'harmony activities'. Prioritising input to Luton's community cohesion with links to other primaries that the ones pupils attend to widen community awareness and give children the opportunity to mix with children from other backgrounds, something they are not doing through their mainstream schools.

## **Detail of findings overall from observation and recognition meeting**

### **1. Create an effective learning environment - Advanced**

Clearly a well organised environment. Excellent relationship with the host primary school for the last 12 years. Strong organisational structure with headteacher dedicated to overall management of the school and deputy head focusing on education. Joint assemblies with Downside demonstrate and reinforce your relationship and children's respect for the learning environment. QDA noted following his visit to the school – 'despite its size the school gives the impression of a great family environment'.

### **2. Teach effectively - Advanced**

Excellent staffing with 26 teachers and 24 TAs including two recent pupils. Team meeting at beginning of each school day. Clear programmes of study and strong monitoring of reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar - with emphasis on extending range of expression. Enrichment of language through annual visit to Polish theatre.

### **3. Record progress and achievement - Advanced**

The school's approach is based on skills acquisition and very practical to develop the children's ability to 'operate in Polish'. Progression through each year and through their whole time at the school is assessed formatively. Annual reports to parents of pupil progress and 'fridge calendar'/week-by-week plan to enable parents to continue the learning at home.

### **4. Choose the right resources - Advanced**

Programme is based on three key documents – a curriculum from USA for children learning Polish outside Poland; the AQA GCSE and A level syllabus; and the school's own tailored programme. History and elements of Geography are also taught, based on the A level programme but starting with Year 6 children. Elzbieta, the school's deputy head, is one of the leading teachers preparing resources for AQA Polish A level. 'Ciekawskie Pioro' books used for Yrs 1-4 support different learning styles and range of home exposure for children in UK.

### **5. Plan and develop your organisation - Advanced**

The passion and dedication of the headteacher, Marian Biskupski, is admirable, particularly notable that he has such a strong and committed team around him. Many of the teachers have been with the school for 10 years or more. Photos of the Annual Parents' Meeting show lots of consultation – flipchart sheets with suggestions for development, as do the parent consultation questionnaires. A member of Luton Supplementary School Network and participant in local community activities.

### **6. Select and support staff and volunteers - Advanced**

Detailed recruitment procedure with interview and induction. Clear volunteer contract, regular support and training with online teacher guidelines. CPD – internal training on teaching methods and recently 23 teachers/TAs completed online course 'how to raise a bilingual child'.

### **7. Make sure children are safe - Advanced**

Safeguarding is integrated into the volunteer job description. Parent volunteers on rota for snack shop and general school admin wear high viz jackets. E-Safety leaflet and training in place. DSL and deputy, 4 first aiders and 4 fire marshals (not the same people). Fire risk assessment last completed in September 2018. Excellent risk assessment for school trips seen.

### **8. Manage finances**

Income exceeds expenditure. The organisation clearly budgets effectively and manages finances wisely. Annual accounts for year ending 31/8/16 seen. Petty cash claim form clear and laptop loan form. Financial discussion noted in minutes of monthly management meetings. Insurance cover in place. The funding is predominantly from fees and the organisation is unincorporated, which is of concern for a school of this size. Recommend MC looks at becoming CIO or Co.Ltd. and increases the size of the management committee from 3 to at least 5.