Introducing Moorside Primary School

Moorside Primary School is a Foundation Trust School which means that whilst the Local Authority funds and supports the school on the same basis as all other Local Authority maintained schools, it is the school governing body, rather than the local authority, that is the employer. However, we still must teach the National Curriculum, follow the School Admission Code, employ teaching staff under the terms of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and, of course, we are inspected by Ofsted. Moorside joined the West End Schools Trust in November 2018, a group of nine schools that work together to share experience and expertise and to develop practice. Through the Trust our staff have the opportunity to work regularly with colleagues from our partner schools and we also work with a number of other partners, including Newcastle City Council, Gateshead Council and a variety of community and private specialist organisations to equip staff with specific knowledge and skills and to support our children.

Moorside Primary School is situated in the west end of the city not far from the city centre. There is an active Governing Body; members often visit the school and are closely involved in school life. Moorside Primary is a two form entry school with approximately 430 children which is larger than average. The number of children on roll fluctuates due to high levels of mobility and children entering our school at different points in their education sometimes with little or no previous education.

Our school community is very diverse with over thirty languages spoken and more than 80% of the children do not have English as their first language. The number of Pupil Premium children is above national average at around 64% with at least 15% of children identified with Special Educational Needs. Mobility is high seeing children and their families moving in and out of the local area and school due to a range of circumstances. These few statistics give an indication of some of the challenges we face and overcome in order to ensure that our children receive an enjoyable and engaging educational experience that supports them to achieve their best and equips them for their next steps.

We work from the principle that all children deserve to experience success and that all of them may need some tailored support to make that happen. Our teaching method is an expression of this principle. We have introduced "group" teaching throughout the school to promote differentiation and to identify situations where children need targeted additional support. We have recently developed a skills based curriculum so that our children's many diverse talents can be recognised and celebrated. Ensuring high quality first wave teaching is a priority for us. We value our staff and have high expectations of them and we invest in their development.

Developing children's language skills is key. All of our teachers have to be equipped to teach phonics. The teaching of reading with fluency and understanding is a priority. Significant investment has been made to ensure that children have access to a wide range of high quality books in a range of languages. The children have assisted us in progressing this development by identifying books that they wanted to

see in their classrooms and in their school library. Staff are trained in using Voice 21 strategies to develop children's speaking and listening skills across the curriculum and we encourage children to be active learners in the classroom.

We have extended the range of practical aids available to children to develop their maths skills and expect to see these used daily in our classrooms. Children have responded well to being able to access these resources. We have also investing heavily in improving the physical environment both in and out of doors. The school had been converted to an "open plan" internal layout when it was part of a Federation. In the course of the last year we have re-instated the internal walls. A complete rewire and upgrading of some IT facilities was recently completed.

Our children live in a built up area principally in homes without gardens. We want outdoor learning to be an integral part of our curriculum and children's learning. Our extensive grounds have recently been re-fenced to ensure security. We have redeveloped and re-equipped the outside area for Early Years and aspects of the Year One and Two outside space and we have installed a MUGA and a running track. We have recently upgraded our outside areas and included new play equipment and outside exercise equipment. Collectively, these developments will support children's learning, well-being and environmental awareness.

We actively engage with our Parents/Carers in school. We regularly invite our families in to school to learn together in workshops that are delivered by both our own staff and external professionals. Parents/Carers are given overviews of learning on a half-termly basis so that they become familiar with what their children are learning and learn ways themselves in which to support them.

Here are a few comments from our children:

I feel proud of myself.
It's hard for me to come in
to school sometimes.
I always want to.
My teachers help me.

It is fair in school.
Everyone gets help.
Everyone is important.

I feel proud of myself.
It's hard for me to come in
to school sometimes.
I always want to.
My teachers help me.

Just when I think I know
everything, my teacher makes
me think more! I like a
challenge, I am very curious.