

## School Improvement Plan 2007-08 *Summary document*

Fifteen development areas lay at the heart of the Somersham Primary School Improvement Plan. Each one incorporates prioritised\* projects, and is underpinned by an action plan that is reviewed each term. We believe in the need to sustain the momentum for school improvement through a robust school self-evaluation programme. For each area, this is indicated by *key questions* that need to be answered and supported with evidence.

The key priorities have been identified through staff and governors analysing needs and areas for development and in response to national priorities.

### **Priorities for Action in 2006-2007** *progress review*

The following areas represented major projects:

- **Learning & Teaching**

- **To use SEAL strategies and resources to further develop children's emotional and mental skills, and to promote calm and reflective behaviour in school and beyond.**

*A full staff training program has run throughout the year, which has included sharing SEAL skills and learning techniques with Teaching Assistants and Midday Supervisors. Teams covered four of the themes, including a well received Anti-Bullying Week of activities in November. We are now entering the second year of the rolling schedule, meaning that the themes are planned to take place in the appropriate term. A high profile has been attached to embedding SEAL messages throughout the school, with eye-catching displays in the hall and ongoing areas in each classroom. The playtime buddy system has continued to offer support to children who may feel lonely and/or isolated, and individual teams are developing their own pupil support networks, such as Circle of Friends in Middle School (from Autumn 2007). Parental involvement has been sought through lead features in the school newsletter, including suggested family activities, and children's work on the school website (class web pages).*

- **To develop the cultural dimension of children's learning by enrolling on the International Schools Award (ISA) programme.**

*An audit of school practice revealed that that we are already meeting the Foundation level criteria for ISA, and this was duly attained in September. Pupils' cultural awareness is highlighted through planned activities within each team, as exemplified on revised curriculum maps. Drama productions during the year featured cultural themes (Christmas Plays 2006). This was also a common theme for hall displays and assembly presentations. Our charity focus for Autumn term was putting together shoe boxes for delivery to Kosovan families, which was followed up with first-hand photographs and stories relating to the 3000 mile mission delivered by local minister Richard Hetherington. Efforts were also made to set up electronic links with several schools in different countries (Uganda, Australia), although it was difficult to sustain these and we will broaden our search for such opportunities in the coming year.*

- **Special Educational Needs**

- **To draft a whole school policy for Special Educational Needs and review whole school initial assessment IEP target setting procedures.**

*The policy was redrafted following a wide consultation process. A summary pamphlet was also published and sent home to all parents. Copies of the new policy in full are available on the school's website. Initial assessment was found to be inconsistent and therefore the school's SENCo introduced a system of 'Provision Mapping'. This identifies individuals and pupil groups who are achieving lower than, or significantly lower than expected standards in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. Armed with this information, which is updated twice each year, staff are able to plan and monitor effective intervention strategies. The SENCo has revised pupils' Individual Education Plans to emphasise more effective and transparent target setting. An audit of existing practice was also completed with the help of the school's Attached Inspector (report: June 2007), from which it was acknowledged that the school provides 'an inclusive, supportive environment'. Further development of the SENCo's role in terms of the management and deployment of teaching assistants will be explored in the coming year.*

- **Literacy**

- **To be aware of current developments in the teaching of phonics and to implement any changes to current practice which are deemed necessary in line with national guidance.**

*Very good progress made. Actions proposed by English Curriculum Working Party in Autumn term have been thoroughly evaluated and indicate positive movement in a number of areas. CAS Synthetics Phonics scheme was trialled and will provide a good platform for use of 'Letters and Sounds' program in EYFS and KS1. Early Years' staff are using more detailed daily phonics lesson plans and are relocating timing of discrete daily phonics session to first thing in the morning session following assemblies. Use of the outdoor environment to link with phonics is developing well and teaching assistants are used particularly effectively in Year 1 to support differentiated tasks (support and extension). Phonetically based reading books have been*

purchased to support children's independent and guided reading for both Early Years and KSI. S.H. has had a marked impact in her monitoring, support and leadership role within Lower school.

- **To familiarise staff with the revised framework for Literacy.**

Good progress made in this area. Staff training was ongoing through the year, including three dedicated staff meetings which outlined main changes within the new framework, examined key focus areas for this school, and acted as forums for feedback on units which staff had used on a trial basis. Staff were generally positive about the teaching sequences suggested in the framework, especially when the use of visual literacy was involved. However there was also some frustration expressed due to the difficulty in accessing suggested resources. This should improve next year as we move towards full implementation (Autumn 2008).

- **Curriculum development**

- **To proceed further in reviewing the curriculum framework, ensuring appropriate breadth and balance while making provision for learning opportunities in the creative arts and ICT that are increasingly dynamic and exciting.**

This was a focus for staff development and team planning. New curriculum grids were trialled that made explicit links between core and foundation subject areas. These have been adopted and time is allocated at the beginning of each term for staff to share their team grids with colleagues, before the information is passed on to parents as part of the Home School link (also published on the school's website). The creative arts continued to exert an encouraging influence on children's learning. Curriculum activities in art and design technology (sculpture, textiles, pottery), as well as expanded use of digital technology (video recording, web page design) role play and performance ('Bully' and 'Alice' in Middle and Upper School respectively) have certainly added greater dynamism to the children's learning and achievement.

- **Targets and Assessment**

- **To use and update pupil performance data spreadsheets to monitor pupil progress each term, in core subject areas.**

A common pro-forma spreadsheet was introduced and amended, and teams use this to set targets based on test and teacher assessment data. This is a formative tool to promote analysis of performance data for key groups of learners, which is updated by team leaders each term. There remains a need to track and to moderate pupil scores more closely, and this will form a major improvement area in the forthcoming SIP.

- **Staff Professional training (CPD)**

- **To prepare for and achieve revalidation as an Investor in People organisation.**

The IIP revalidation process is thorough and detailed. MD co-ordinated the school's application through gathering a comprehensive portfolio of evidence and planning an appropriate timetable for the assessor's visit. The resulting report (February 2007) confirmed that the school continues to meet the standards required for the award of Investor in People status. It complimented the school's 'excellent reputation for the provision of child-centred education where every child matters and every child receives a first class education'; 'excellent processes for monitoring and evaluating the impact of staff development'; and 'Emphasis on valuing people'.

- **Governors**

- **To improve the role of governors so that their responsibilities are shared more evenly.**

It was pointed out by OfSTED Inspectors during their last visit (November 2005) that the effectiveness of governors in discharging their duties and responsibilities was hampered by a shortage of numbers. This year, under the impetus of the new Chair, there has been a steady rise in recruitment, governors' direct involvement in and support for the children's learning, and profile (online and face-to-face) among staff and parents.

- **Finance**

- **To successfully transfer to Bank Account status and achieve competency according to County scrutiny within 3 months.**

The school took on Bank Account Status in October 2006 following County led training, which has continued at cluster level in Spring and Summer terms. Month end returns have been submitted to time and in balance throughout by the school's Office & Finance Manager, JP. The headteacher has monitored this process closely. Following a period of scrutiny by County, the school has now moved to a quarterly return arrangement (since May 2007), although Month end figures will continue to be submitted in line with best financial practice. JP's enhanced role and increased responsibilities in managing this process has been recognised in terms of revised remuneration within the overall office budget.

- **Community**

- **To review school policies and practice in preparing for successful validation as a nationally accredited Healthy School.**

This process was undertaken by the Health Promoting Schools' working party (teaching and support staff, parent and governor representatives, school's catering manager and caretaker), chaired this year by ML. Active input from children was received via the school council and Eco Schools Committee. Guidance from County's CAS team was useful in framing the school's application, which involved meeting detailed criteria associated with evidencing the whole school community's commitment to and involvement in healthy practices. The application was submitted at the beginning of the Summer term, and we were delighted to receive confirmation of our enhanced Healthy Schools Status in June 2007. Revalidation will be required in three years.

## **Priorities for Action in 2007 - 2008**

### **1. Learning and Teaching**

Self-evaluation key question:  
**How well are all the pupils taught?**

The objectives of this priority are:

- To promote an achievement culture within every class and around the school\*;
- To inspire learning through activities that enrich and develop creativity within the curriculum, such as observational study, printing and electronic communications;
- To encourage and refine children's thinking skills through use of teacher questioning, reasoning and discouraging one word answers;
- To continue to promote assessment for learning techniques in pupil feedback and marking of work.

### **2. Special Educational Needs**

Self-evaluation key question:  
**How well does the school cater for its pupils?**

The **developmental objectives** of this priority are:

- To ensure that all identified SEN children receive accurate support, monitoring and assessment\*;
- To provide the SENCo with a clearer, more specific management role with TAs supporting SEN children;
- To implement professional development for SEN TAs

The **maintenance objectives** of this priority are:

- To smarten targets included in children's IEPs based on provision map priorities;
- To offer support to teachers on how to use SEN resources effectively;
- To meet regularly with outside agencies that support school needs;
- To keep paperwork up to date and in order.

### **3. Literacy**

Self-evaluation key question:  
**How good are curriculum and other opportunities?**

The **developmental objectives** of this priority are:

- To effectively implement the new framework for Literacy\*;
- To accelerate the pace of teaching and learning phonics\*.

The **maintenance objectives** of this priority are:

- To improve standards for more able writers;
- To review intervention programmes and ensure training is targeted in key areas.

### **4. Mathematics**

Self-evaluation key question:  
**How good are curriculum and other opportunities?**

The **developmental objectives** of this priority are:

- All staff to plan from the new strategy for 5 weeks of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Summer term to prepare for full implementation from September 2008\*;
- To ensure all staff are using new problem solving resources effectively;
- To analyse pupil performance data (FSP, KSI, KS2) to review and inform curricular and group targets.

The **maintenance objectives** of this priority are:

- d. Identify and purchase necessary resources;
- e. Identify CPD needs, particularly of new staff.

## 5. Science

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How good are curriculum and other opportunities?**

The **developmental objectives** of this priority are;

- a. To analyse pupil performance data (KS1, KS2) with a particular focus on gender and skills / knowledge differences between key groups achieving NC Level 4 and Level 5;
- b. To keep examples of work where ICT has been used in teaching and recording scientific work;
- c. To improve the quality of Science assessment to better inform planning and teaching, and to enable Teacher Assessments to be more accurate within and between teaching teams;
- d. To improve creativity within Science teaching through cross-curricular planning, as part of the ongoing review process.

The **maintenance objectives** of this priority are:

- e. To continue to develop links with ICT.
- f. To continue to audit resources, look at new equipment in catalogues and purchase relevant equipment.
- g. To further develop effective and efficient methods of assessment and levelling work.

## 6. Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How good are curriculum and other opportunities?**

The **developmental objectives** of this priority are:

- a. To enhance self-evaluation practices by achieving the national BECTa ICT Mark\*;
- b. To trial an assessment / review scheme that enables staff and children to recognise their next steps in terms of skills and knowledge development;
- c. To promote online / electronic safety as a whole school;
- d. To introduce new, innovative hardware, and associated software, into the school;
- e. To set up digital cultural links with infant and/or junior schools in another country.

The **maintenance objectives** of this priority are:

- f. To review ICT and Internet Safety policies, and update as appropriate;
- g. Audit all ICT hardware and software in school by licences, and relative usefulness;
- h. To continue to encourage wider engagement with school's website through development of the children's section, featuring presentations children's achievements on class web pages;
- i. To further improve children's access to high quality hardware and software, including the provision of PC mini-suites in each classroom and individual email accounts for children in Years 5 and 6 (using STARZ);
- j. To provide training and support for all staff in the use of Interactive Whiteboards and networked PCs.

## 7. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How well does the school cater for its pupils?**

The **developmental objectives** of this priority are;

- a. To introduce the new Letters and Sounds as part of our Phonic programme\*;
- b. To monitor and track children's individual progress using the FSP (eProfiles).

The **maintenance objectives** of this priority are:

- c. To provide a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum for all of the children;
- d. To exemplify children's progress using a wide range of written, oral and pictorial evidence.

*Self-evaluation key questions:*

***How good are curriculum and other opportunities?***

***How well does the school cater for its pupils?***

## **8. Curriculum Development**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To further refine resources and teaching techniques in delivering Modern Foreign Languages to Key Stage 1 and 2 classes;
- b. To revise Geography Long Term planning looking for continuity and progression as new areas of learning are added;
- c. To integrate History into Literacy wherever possible in KSI;
- d. To broaden whole school singing repertoire and widen the range of instruments played within school;
- e. To extend provision of Out of School Hours Learning (OHSL) as part of SS Co PE schools' partnership;
- f. To review the coverage of Design Technology activities within and between Key Stages, particularly in food technology, and the allocation of appropriate resources;
- g. To ensure that SEAL and PSHCE are fully integrated into medium term planning, and to complete a long term overview;
- h. To monitor RE planning and curriculum coverage between teams, particularly opportunities for AT2( learning from R.E)
- i. To create a portfolio of evidence for Art & Design that helps staff, children and parents to track an individual child's progress through the national curriculum levels
- j. To develop creativity and imaginative learning through the performing arts;
- k. To further expand the role of the school's Eco Council through involvement in the national Eco Schools Award Scheme, with Silver standard being achieved by July 2008;
- l. To further develop a broad range of extra-curricular activities, with a particular focus on expanding the range of activities for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children.

*Self-evaluation key questions:*

***How well do pupils achieve?***

***How far has the school improved since its last inspection?***

## **9. Targets and Assessment**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To ensure children's progress towards the school's projected targets.
- b. To identify and track the progress of more able pupils in core subject areas\*.
- c. To develop work programmes and effectively resource activities for gifted and talented pupils in all curriculum areas.
- d. To target pupils' phonological awareness through individual programmes.

*Self-evaluation key question:*

***How well are all the pupils taught?***

## **10. Staff Professional Training (CPD)**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To promote high-quality staff development through reflection on practice and developing professional skills and understanding;
- b. To ensure an effective transition to new performance management requirements for all staff\*;
- c. To encourage staff leadership and participation.

*Self-evaluation key question:*

***How well is the school led, managed and governed?***

## **11. Governors**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To strive to ensure active membership of the governing body does not drop below 12 members, and includes a minimum of one staff representative (not including the Head and Deputy Head);
- b. To ensure that governors receive appropriate training in safer recruitment of staff;
- c. To ensure that opportunities to incorporate environmentally advantageous outcomes are included in all strategic, planning and expenditure decisions, by including environmental impact as a standard item in its monitoring and review procedures, and evaluating their impact annually;
- d. To achieve a high level of understanding of the new performance management procedures (through outside INSET and other opportunities) and to support the school in framing the new procedures.

## **12. Finance**

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How well is the school led, managed and governed?**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To establish a three-year budget program that sets the school budget on a stable footing following restructuring;
- b. To continue to manage the school's budget in accordance with Bank Account Status best practice.

## **13. Community**

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How well does the school work in partnership with parents and the wider community?**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To frame an application for Low Carbon Buildings Programme (Phase 2) to generate electricity through the installation of solar panels on the school's roof;
- b. To further develop the reach and use of the school's website;
- c. To further improve communications with parents by developing the Home School Links programme;
- d. To continue to build up links with local playgroups, nurseries and partner schools.

## **14. Premises**

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How good is the school's environment for learning?**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To continue to refurbish classroom and communal areas within the school;
- b. To plant a garden area in front of the main school entrance, and to regenerate the school's environmental area, in consultation with children and local businesses;
- c. To develop the means to generate electricity for use within and beyond the school through involvement in LCBP Phase 2.

## **15. Health and Safety**

*Self-evaluation key question:*

**How well does the school cater for its pupils?**

The objectives of this priority are:

- a. To review the whole school Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.
- b. To put in place a comprehensive Emergency Plan.
- c. To agree on an effective long-term solution in renewing a particular tree root damaged asphalt area on the playground.
- d. To further support the improvement in and pupil take-up of school meals.