

Tilery Primary School Visit 13 July 2016

Attendees: Cllr Grainge, Peter Mennear

Contact: Julia Robinson, Early Years and Foundation Stage Team Leader

Tilery is the first school in the Borough to provide for 2 year olds. The school has benefitted from capital funding to remodel its Early Years building, which is separate from the rest of the school. Sessions can be mixed, with 2 and 3 year olds in same group.

Tilery has close links with the Star Children's Centre, and this enables the school to makes links when children from families are accessing both.

Early Years Pupil Premium (PP) has enabled the school to sponsor two children into full time early years provision (these have additional needs identified).

Staff believe there is a strong community feel in the area, with parents wanting the best for their children, but needing support to help them achieve that. Almost all children entering services at Tilery are behind the level of development where they should be at for their age. At age 5, 40% had reached a Good Level of Development.

Tilery feels that it has a good relationship with the local community and this should ensure good take up of the childcare offer from local families. Staff have seen a noticeable difference between the 2 and 3 year olds, and as cohorts of children move through 2 year old provision into school, staff will be able to monitor the impact on outcomes.

The school regularly accepts asylum seeker and refugee children. Children may only be with the school for a relatively short period of time before being moved on. They often require intensive support, and a recent example was provided of Syrian children. Early years staff needed to gradually extend the length of sessions provided to these, and socialisation was particularly important. The school needed to provide language support.

Funding for the 2 year old offer is calculated and paid on a termly basis, whereas 3 year funding is set annually and is less than the 2 year funding. 2 and 3 year childcare rates were set locally. Pupil Premium rates are set nationally. It was stated that the school runs its Early Years services at a loss but choose to invest in them.

There is a garden area and Little Sprouts CIC provide services on site. The school staff have established a Food Group to see what projects can be undertaken to improve awareness of good food, including education of parents.

There is a school-run holiday club (with some PP funded places), which provides food, and food poverty during holiday periods is a recognised issue. The school also runs a breakfast club.

The school often works directly with parents through Early Help meetings, and Pupil Premium helps fund two Pupil and Family Support workers who work closely on Children in Need and Child Protection issues. There are at least one Early Help meeting per day.

An identified issue is that children lack resilience to overcome setbacks, and a large part of the school's efforts are based on social support and raising aspirations. This is throughout the school and has included taking years 5-6 to Oxford University and other trips. The Tilery Passport enables pupils to track their progress across a range of key skills eg. by end of key stage 2 pupils can demonstrate they are able to cook a meal.

The school has a programme of activities which parents are asked to contribute to at a cost of £5 per term which enables a mix of trips, activities and play activity.

Across the school there are a high proportion of children eligible for Pupil Premium. The school uses this to undertake activities including:

- Teaching Assistants (Tilery aims to have a high proportion, including in Early Years)
- mentors to tackle issues such as attachment
- visits (both nationally and locally to increase knowledge of local area)
- sporting activity and visits which is particularly important to local children
- breakfast and holiday clubs
- sponsored places
- cooking and food activities.

Some of this activity is also funded via contributions for example, but PP was seen as key, particularly to ensure a high level of staffing.

To enable further access to the 30 hour entitlement for three year olds, it would be likely that further investment on the site would be needed. However this would be beneficial if the school could work with parents to improve the number of people working in the local community.