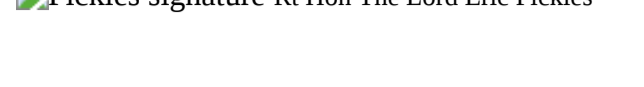


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St Antony's Catholic Primary School

A Message from Lord Pickles and Lord Blunkett, followed by St Antony's Catholic Primary School's best practice article

The ability to listen and learn from one another has always been vital in parliament, in business and in most aspects of daily life. But at this particular moment in time, as national and global events continue to reiterate, it is uncommonly crucial that we forge new channels of communication and reinforce existing ones. The following article from St Antony's Catholic Primary School is an attempt to do just that. We would welcome your thoughts on this or any other Parliamentary Review article.



BEST PRACTICE REPRESENTATIVE 2018

St Antony's Catholic Primary School



"The Annunciation of the Birth of Christ" in song and dance by the children in the cast in "The Christmas Story: The Hand-Maid of the Lord" 2017



Head teacher Angela Moore proudly poses with award in hand

St Antony's was originally established in 1862 by Ursuline nuns. Head teacher Angela Moore was appointed as the first head teacher of ethnic minority heritage at this school in October 2013, and formally took up office in January 2014. Between 2009 and 2013, St Antony's was languishing near the bottom of the borough's league tables in the lower sixth of schools within the area. Angela's solution to this challenge was to focus predominantly on pupil progress. She therefore made strategic and fundamental changes to the structures and curriculum, ensuring that the pupils – particularly those at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 – would make accelerated progress in all core areas.

By June 2014, the school had moved from the bottom of the borough's league tables to the top. The school had made a meteoric rise to fourth in the borough over the first two terms under my leadership, and I had every intention for us to continue to sustain this level of progress.

What made the difference?

Changing the narrative, the culture and ethos of the school – getting children and staff to take on a "can do" attitude instead of allowing the established defeatist mindsets to continue to thrive. This approach demanded re-thinking and unlearning alongside fastidious but collaborative work with all stakeholders. I had established with governors, parents and staff the philosophy that raising

REPORT CARD
ST ANTONY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Head teacher: Angela Moore
- Founded in 1862
- Location: Forest Gate, Newham
- Type of school: Voluntary aided Catholic primary school
- No. of students: 487
- Copious amount of after school clubs, vast provision of resources enabled through self-sacrificing and dedicated staff
- stantonyscatholicprimaryschool.co.uk

THE PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW
Highlighting best practice



It's all smiles from head teacher Angela Moore and her leadership team as they receive the award for being named in the top ten schools in the country from the Mayor's representative Cllr. Canon Ann Easter

“Progress in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above the national standard and in the highest 10 per cent”

Raise 2017

expectations and raising the bar was the way forward for all abilities. We accepted that changing the thinking that being on the SEND register was an excuse to underachieve, and started to dispel the myth that being "deprived" was naturally linked to low attainment. At the time, approximately 25 per cent of the 472 pupils of the school met the criteria for free school meals (FSM), well above the national average. This was going to be a serious challenge – but one we were willing to take on.

I set about getting the staff at all levels to buy into the fact that raising attainment had more to do with building self-esteem and self-worth than merely putting strategies in place to drive standards. In light of this concept, the head and leadership team began to work more on the "affective domain" to raise the children's cognitive abilities. We started to get children to "believe they can achieve", while giving them strategies to make this happen: we used the performing arts to build confidence in our children through new programmes and initiatives established by Master Chan and his team.

One of my major challenges from the very outset was to get the whole staff to buy into the new vision for

the school which was inextricably linked to the fact that St Antony's is a faith school. Therefore, we should never shy away from taking "leaps of faith" – holding fast to the precept that "with Christ all things are indeed possible!" Our ethos became one that was palpable; this was encapsulated in our school vision: "to be an engine of real and sustainable change within the community". The change we wanted to establish most was "change from within" each individual in the school.

This vision was shared with the children and they got to understand it fully through small group work, discussions in assemblies, circle time, school council meetings and class debates. They were asked to voice what this would demand of them individually and how this would directly impact on their learning and behaviour. Alongside the children generally accepting and understanding this new precedent, they got their parents on board – the majority of whom supported the changes implemented – even daily early morning booster classes at 8 o'clock for years 5 and 6.

BEST PRACTICE REPRESENTATIVE 2018

The school's accelerated progress plan was built on the "ordinary magic of hard graft", focusing on key aims – agreed on by governors, staff and parents – which formed our "whole school priorities". These were as follows:

- Development of an effective leadership team inclusive of SLT, SMT and governance underpinned by effective CPD and focused pedagogy;
- Raising achievement and attainment in reading, writing and maths;
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- Developing an environment which enhances and supports learning.

All these changes did not come without a heavy cost, however, there was an exodus of staff within the first year of my tenure as a result of the demand for 100 per cent commitment to the new thinking and approach as well as the establishment of non-negotiable aspirational targets and outcomes for all children from nursery to year 6. I lived my mantra of "walking by faith"; therefore, where others saw peril my governors and I saw possibilities. We were able to secure a new cadre of experienced, creative teachers alongside newly qualified teachers that brought fresh outlook to the school. We also took the visionary step of appointing specialists in maths and English in 2014 to further drive standards.

Staff turnover stabilised and we now have a hard working teaching and learning team who are child focused and result oriented. Our leadership team is currently our "dream team", as they effectively model, manage and monitor securing high standards which we have now come to be known for. The leadership team supports and challenges all staff to empower and develop.

Staff are reflective yet also critical of their own performance and recognise how to shape their practice in order to raise standards for the children. One of the main outcomes of the changes made was the change of culture in the school; the children are now used to being challenged and find enjoyment in their learning. Our inspirational curriculum lead, Miss Wade, ensures that the children's learning has depth and breadth and fosters cross curricular learning. Our hard working SENCO, Miss Baptiste, with the head changed the structure of the SEND provision to include the teaching of life skills such as sewing, cooking, baking and cycling in the afternoons for our high needs pupils. We extended our out of hours learning provisions from being limited to five after school clubs to 45 clubs including dance, drama and performing arts, orchestra, cooking and baking, fencing, karate, French, Spanish, debating, junior theology, publishing art and animation.

Our school is currently the top school in the London Borough of Newham (DFE league tables 2017) and among the top ten schools in the country. St Antony's Catholic Primary has become synonymous with high achievement, but our main challenge moving forward is to sustain this level of excellence.



"Many Cultures... One School" – Black History Month theme depicted by the children in their cultural costumes

“Reading, writing and mathematics progress was in the top 20 per cent nationally for at least two years for all pupils: middle prior attainers, high prior attainers and disadvantaged pupils”

Ofsted data benchmarking 2017

This article was sponsored by St Antony's Catholic Primary School. The Parliamentary Review is wholly funded by the representatives who write for it. The publication in which this article originally appeared contained the following foreword from Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng.

Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng's Foreword For The Parliamentary Review

By Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng

This year's Parliamentary Review reflects on a tumultuous and extraordinary year, globally and nationally. As well as being an MP, I am a keen student of history, and I am conscious that 2020 would mark the end of an era. It will be remembered as the year in which we concluded Brexit negotiations and finally left the European Union. Above all, it will be remembered as the year of Covid-19.

In our fight against the pandemic, I am delighted that our vaccination programme is beginning to turn the tide – and I pay tribute to the British businesses, scientists and all those who have helped us to achieve this. But the virus has dealt enormous damage, and we now have a duty to rebuild our economy.

We must ensure that businesses are protected. We have made more than £350 billion available to that end, with grants, business rates relief and our furlough scheme supporting more than 11 million people and jobs in every corner of the country, maintaining livelihoods while easing the pressure on employers. The next step is to work with business to build back better and greener, putting the net zero carbon challenge at the heart of our recovery. This is a complex undertaking, but one which I hope will be recognised as a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Through the prime minister's ten point plan for a green industrial revolution, we can level up every region of the UK, supporting 250,000 green jobs while we accelerate our progress towards net zero carbon emissions.

With our commitment to raise R&D spending to 2.4% of GDP and the creation of the Advanced Research & Invention Agency, we are empowering our fantastic researchers to take on groundbreaking research, delivering funding with flexibility and speed. With this approach, innovators will be able to work with our traditional industrial heartlands to explore new technologies, and design and manufacture the products on which the future will be built – ready for export around the globe.

And I believe trade will flourish. We are a leading nation in the fight against climate change. As the host of COP26 this year, we have an incredible opportunity to market our low-carbon products and expertise. Our departure from the EU gives us the chance to be a champion of truly global free trade; we have already signed trade deals with more than 60 countries around the world.

As we turn the page and leave 2020 behind, I am excited about the new chapter which Britain is now writing for itself, and for the opportunities which lie ahead of us.

Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

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