Exeter School Improvement Quadrad
Schools Represented and Headteachers:
Barley Lane: Michael McCourt
Bidwell Brook: Jacqui Warne
Ellen Tinkham School: Jacqui Warne
Southbrook: Bronwen Cashere
Babcock representative: Jacky King

Visit to Barley Lane School: Tuesday March 1st 2016

1. Underpinning Principles and Rationale
a) **Leadership and Management**
   Leadership and Management is recognised as being fundamental to school effectiveness. As a result, Leadership and Management will act as the vehicle for the work carried out by the Quadrad. This approach is mirrored by the emphasis that the latest OFSTED framework puts on Leadership and Management including Governance.
b) The complete Exeter School Improvement Quadrad framework is appended to this document.

2. Introduction
a) The Headteacher was very well prepared for this visit with key documents being available to the team.
b) The team were able to join school assembly, to visit classes, to talk with the students and to have discussions with the headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for quality assuring teaching and learning.

3. Areas of Outstanding Practice
3. 1 An improved learning environment.
Evidence:
a) The environment is helping the students to engage differently with their learning.
b) The children and young people value their school and as a result the fabric of the school and its equipment and resources are cared for and respected.
c) The development of facilities such as the creation of a football space demonstrate to the students that the school and the staff recognise and are responsive to their needs. As a result the students know that staff care about them.

3.2. School Ethos
Evidence:
a) The school has a positive ethos and moral basis. The shift in ethos cannot be underestimated.
b) Staff accept a shared responsibility for the learning and behaviour of the students. The students know that the staff care for them.
c) Positive messages that reinforce the school's ethos and values are displayed all around the school. For example staff and students are reminded of the importance of kindness and humility.

d) In assembly the students were very settled and responsive. Every member of staff fed back a positive comment about the previous day and stated that they looked forward to the new day and the students' commitment to their learning and positive behaviour.

e) There was a calm and purposeful ambiance around the school.

f) On a peer to peer basis adults modelled appropriate behaviours for the students.

3.3 Student engagement with learning

Evidence:

a) Morning Assembly set the tone for a purposeful day promoting positive behaviour and learning.

b) In the lessons that were visited, students were actively engaging with their learning.

c) Students showed enthusiasm for their learning.

d) Students were willing and able to talk about their learning.

e) Students were able to evidence wider learning such as showing empathy.

f) Lessons were planned to engage the students

g) Staff were able to intervene quickly, if necessary, to manage low level behaviours.

h) Students were able to discuss prior learning and previous learning was revisited.

i) The specialist autism team recognise that the school is an inclusive environment for the students not just those with autistic spectrum condition. Students respond positively to the structure and routine of the school. As a result, the autism team are going to work with the school to enable it to achieve an Inclusion Award.

j) It is recognised that teachers have to work hard to keep students motivated in lessons. Teachers have to present positively at all times as the students are able to quickly pick up on the nuances of the frailties of staff.

3.4 Support for Student Behaviour

Evidence:

a) Information on students' behaviour feeds into whole school Risk Assessment planning on a half-termly basis with individual Risk Assessments updated as risks emerge and diminish.

b) When out and about around the school staff accept a shared responsibility for the learning and behaviour of the students. The students know that the staff care for them.

c) Students were settled in school. They were polite, respectful and responsive to members of the team at all times. One of the visiting team commented that "no smile went unreturned."

d) The students waited to be dismissed from assembly one class at a time. They clearly knew the routines and rituals that accompanied assembly time.

3.5 Governance

Evidence:

a) A Governance Review has led to a greater emphasis on Governance and Governor involvement in the school. Governors have a clear commitment to wanting to get to know the school better.

b) The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors, working with the Headteacher, has led the development of a reporting framework. The fact that this has been developed by, and with, Governors is an example of strong practice and is to be applauded.

c) Governors have asked the Headteacher to produce a School Improvement Plan that is summarised on 2 pages for each section of the Ofsted framework. This allows the Governors to access the key themes of improvement much more easily. This document then links across to an extended School Improvement monitoring document, the style of which the governors have defined.

d) The Headteacher has prepared comprehensive evidence files which are used to enable Governors to be better informed about the school by having direct access to key data and

information. The Headteacher was able to navigate around the files to provide evidence of questions that were posed of him.
e) There is evidence of Governors asking the Headteacher for further information or to produce information is for them in a more accessible format for example how Restrictive Physical Interventions are recorded.

3.6 Headteacher's Commitment
Evidence:
a) The Headteacher has shown continued commitment to the school and through his moral purpose. He has been able to sustain the positive ethos of the school and to consolidate progress as evidenced in the last Ofsted report and the school remains a stable and purposeful community.

3.7 Succession planning
Evidence:
a) The Headteacher feels that he now has an emerging group of committed staff who have the understanding and skills needed to develop strong, positive relationships with the students which helps to promote and protect good order in the school. As a result the Headteacher is now able to develop a leadership team.
b) The Headteacher recognises that the next significant step for his leadership is to enable staff to manage the school safely in his absence. In recognition of the importance of this it is one of the Headteacher's Appraisal targets. The Headteacher is acutely aware of the need to ensure the integrity of the school when he is off site.
c) The Headteacher was in the Assembly as part of the School Community but Assembly was led by a member of staff.

4. Suggested areas for further development:
4.1 Governance
a) As discussed, use the suggested ideas further develop the framework for reporting to the Governing body so that it illustrates what Governors will explore next in terms of their monitoring.
b) Help Governors understand the importance of school visits in gaining direct firsthand experience of what is going on in the school. This is a key monitoring strategy that can check out the detailed reports and supplementary evidence that the headteacher provides.

4.2 Teaching and Learning
a) The time is right to reinvigorate and re-energise the teaching agenda in the school. This can be done by enabling staff to come together as Communities of Practice.
b) As a result, staff should be able to clearly and quickly articulate the school's shared understanding of what constitutes good to outstanding teaching, learning and pupil progress. This could be done by working through clusters of staff who share areas of interest across the school. How Teaching Assistants can be most effectively deployed within the context of the school should be part of this.
c) The script of this shared understanding, purpose and meaning then needs to be shared across all members of staff.
d) The findings of the last few rounds of lesson observations could be used to identify what good to outstanding teaching looks like over time. Key themes from observations could be used.
e) It is noted that the 3 part lesson remains an important approach to teaching and learning at the school. This is due to the fact that this approach provides the routines, rituals and rhythm that

provide the structure that helps students to manage their own behaviour and learning. It will be helpful if the rationale for this is written in the school's Teaching and Learning policy.

f) Take the opportunity to ensure that there are strategies in place for being able to track pupil progress more frequently so that staff are aware of where students are at including those in vulnerable groups such as Children in Care and those in receipt of Pupil Premium.

It should be noted and recognised as an issue for the school, that given the complexity of need and the fragmented nature of the lives of many of the students, behaviour can still get in the way of teaching and learning at times.

5. Remaining Quadrad Visit Dates
- Southbrook: 19/04/16 8.45am start
- Bidwell Brook: 03/05/16 10am start

6. Conclusions

a) Members of the team had all known the school in more troubled times. As a result, they were able to experience for themselves the significant change that has taken place in the school. It is now an orderly and safe environment within which students are able to engage in purposeful learning.

b) Once again the team felt that it had been a privilege to carry out this visit and to enter into professional dialogue with the headteacher about the policy, procedures and guidance that were presented.

c) The Headteacher whose school was visited appreciated the intelligent, sensitive but challenging professional dialogue that was at the heart of this peer review process.

d) All participants on the day worked within the agreed operational framework which enabled challenge, mutual respect, and an open and transparent professional learning conversation.

e) Thanks were extended to the headteacher and staff. The team members asked that the students themselves be thanked and praised for the way that they, without exception, had welcomed the team into the school and in particular into lessons. The students were polite, courteous and respectful at all times. The headteacher should be proud of the ethos that he has been able to develop in the school by holding firm to his moral compass.

f) The school's hospitality was also much appreciated.

RAG Rating of Leadership and Management:	

Outstanding	
Good	
Requires Improvement	
Unsatisfactory	

7. Next Quadrad Visit Date
- Southbrook: 19/04/16 8.45am start

School Improvement Quadrad

Initial Discussions: Exeter Quadrad

12th October 2015: Exeter Quadrad

Schools Represented and Headteachers:

Barley Lane: Michael McCourt

Bidwell Brook: Jacqui Warne

Ellen Tinkham School: Jacqui Warne

Southbrook: Bronwen Cashere

Babcock representative: Jacky King

Principles and Rationale

Leadership and Management

Leadership and Management is recognised as being fundamental to school effectiveness. As a result, Leadership and Management will act as the vehicle for the work carried out by the Quadrad. This approach is mirrored by the emphasis that the latest OFSTED framework puts on Leadership and Management including Governance.

There are a number of recognised key components within the area of Leadership and Management:

- Governance
- Management structure
- Accountability
- Systems: SDP / SEF
- Teaching and Learning
- Innovation and research
- Communication
- Safeguarding
- Visioning: recognising the ambition and aspiration for the school
- Empowering all teachers and support staff to become leaders especially in fulfilling the role of subject leader in small settings.
- Create structures to enable staff to be creative and courageous
- Appraisal and Continuing Professional Development

- A commitment to growing staff who are capable of leading the school safely day to day; maintaining its integrity.

Underpinning values

Work that is undertaken by the Quadrad will:

- Be carried out in an Appreciative way that values the members of the group and the work that is carried out in the partnership schools
- By adopting an Appreciative approach founded on trust and personal and professional integrity a context will be established within which headteachers can both identify and discuss areas for school improvement.
- Be rigorous and robust
- Value the different insights that colleagues who may not have direct experience of a particular type of specialist setting can bring
- Develop and share good practice.
- Facilitate sharing and development of pedagogy: the craft of the classroom
- Promote Reflection and Reflective Practice to enable staff to become more resilient, self-managing and self-developing. This will help reduce absenteeism, encourage staff retention and support succession planning.
- Involve leaders and managers whose responsibilities mean that they have a key role to play in informing the Quadrad process.

Visit Agenda

- The responsibility for drawing up the visit agenda will be devolved to the Headteachers and where relevant their Senior Management Teams and Governing Body. This will help to ensure that the Headteachers and their Leadership and Management Teams have ownership of the visit and the identified the lines of inquiry. This will include consideration of areas of innovation and research.

Planned Quadrad Visit Dates

- Barley Lane: 01/03/16 8.45 am start
- Bidwell Brook: 03/05/16 10am start
- Ellen Tinkham School: 12/01/16 8.45am start
- Southbrook: 19/04/16 8.45am start