



[END OF YEAR REPORT 2017/18]



Contents

- Pg 2. Civitas Schools
- Pg 4. The Civitas Schools team
- Pg 5. 2017/18 review of The Stationers' Foundation Saturday Schools
- Pg 7. The new school year: our focus





Civitas Schools



Civitas Schools are supplementary schools in the very best sense of the word: our role as a project is to enhance the education of the children we meet, to augment their mainstream schooling.

The ethos of Civitas Schools is that all children deserve a first class education; that any child can learn with the right support; and that no child who is behind at school needs to remain so.

We help some of the many children who fall behind at school each year, for whatever reasons. In our schools we set high expectations of what each child we teach might achieve, helping them develop the habit of learning, and endeavouring to remove barriers which inhibit their intellectual development. A failure to deal with children working at below expected academic levels for their ages disadvantages them from the start. They may struggle with their exams, and an impoverished education limits their access to a wider cultural experience and life choices.

Teaching in small classes, grouped by ability rather than age, we focus on the essential basics every child needs to have grasped in order to develop further in their education: reading fluently, spelling accurately, understanding basic but essential mathematical functions, introducing them to grammar and mental arithmetic, and the pleasure of reading.

Civitas Schools was established in 2005, an initiative of the think-tank Civitas who wanted to offer a practical solution to some of the issues in British education. In that time we've demonstrated that with dedicated teachers and good pedagogical methods, any child can learn and - given support and encouragement, even for just an hour or two a week - most will excel.

Our teachers all have a depth and love of subject knowledge that enables them to see each hurdle which has to be overcome by a child for them to really grasp the concepts before them, They then ensure each new stage of knowledge is firmly embedded before moving onto the next stage of teaching.



We would like to thank The Stationers' Foundation for their continued support of the Civitas Schools project in 2017/18. In particular, we want to thank trustee Chris Jolly and liveryman Gerald Hill for their generous support and advice on how to best meet the expectations of The Stationers' Foundation's in partnership with Civitas Schools.

In London we have over 500 children on our waiting lists, and want to ensure as many of them as possible are able to benefit from the teaching support we provide. Without the continued support of donors such as The Stationers' Foundation we will not be able to help these children in the future. We hope to continue working with The Stationers' Foundation this coming academic year.

Justine Brian
Director
1 October 2018



The Civitas Schools team



We are a small team at Civitas Schools, with just two full time staff, in addition to a part time educational advisor role and our annual contracted teaching cohort of between 30-35 teachers.

Justine Brian is project **Director** and is responsible for the direction of the project, all stakeholder relationships, recruitment and management of the teaching cohort, budgeting to ensure a ‘no-frills’ best value provision of service, payroll, and ensuring we provide a high standard of teaching for the children we are able to support each year.

Sadiyah Mir is the project’s **Assistant Director** and manages the day to administration of functions of our schools. Sadiyah deals with communications with parents, school venues and suppliers is tasked with the continued development of our systems and processes to ensure we provide the best support and service we can for our schools and teachers, and of course those who benefit from what we do – parents and children.

Sarah Boyes is our **Education Advisor** as well as one of our longstanding teachers. The part-time Education Advisors role is to develop the best teachers for our schools, starting with their training and induction meeting, to ongoing observations and creating continued professional development opportunities.



2017/18 review of The Stationers' Foundation Saturday Schools



This academic year was an experiment for the two Stationers' funded schools we run.

In consultation with the foundation, we agreed to refocus the schools to ensure we were helping those children most in educational need, rather than providing extra tuition for those children who would undoubtedly benefit from more teaching time each week, but whom weren't significantly struggling.

Ability testing was introduced (across all Civitas Schools) in summer/autumn 2017 so we were clear on each child's attainment level, and which children were struggling the most, with a specific focus in the Stationers' schools of taking on children behind in both English and maths by at least one year. The two Stationers' schools, both located in King's Cross, become 'all-support pupil' schools, taking in children from across the Civitas' King's Cross/Euston catchment area who would have been placed in support groups in other schools (those unable to be part of our standard higher and lower groups), centralising them in schools which could specialise in more remedial teaching, with the aim of bringing the children up to year group attainment level.

We said at the outset of this change of emphasis for the schools that different children would advance at differing rates, and we expected some children to progress swiftly, and move onto other Civitas Schools for additional but not acute support, or indeed to finish their schooling with us entirely and graduate not just from their Stationers' schools, but from supplementary teaching altogether. As this was our first year we feel it's difficult to suggest how long the average could might stay at a Stationers' school - how many extra hours of teaching it takes to make up lost learning – and that at the end of the next academic year we will have better insights into children's needs and overall progress. However, we were very pleased to be able to graduate eight children from the two schools this year, based on testing and their teacher's assessment of their progress and needs. These children will be invited to a graduation ceremony at Stationers' Hall in the autumn to recognise their progress and success.



Teachers at the two schools, in an informal end of year review with the director, highlighted the really quite acute needs of the children we teach at the Stationers' schools - some shockingly so in terms of remedial reading and writing abilities. Grouping these children together both allows our teachers to teach at the pace that best fits their groups as a whole, but has also shown that in some cases children are so far behind they would ideally benefit from one-on-one tuition. In that light, as we can't currently provide that level of support for the number of children who would need it, we decided to cap the intake at the Stationers' schools to a maximum of 21 children (rather than 25-30). This allows us to offer a greater focus on each child's specific needs (which we do as a matter of course anyway at Civitas Schools, but which is more pronounced at the Stationers' schools) where we cannot offer one-on-one tuition.

The low level of attainment was also a slight culture shock to some of our teachers, in terms of the children's needs, and we have been working together to ensure we have the right resources available for them, and are responsive to changing school needs as this ongoing 'all-support' experiment continues. Training sessions with teacher and author Irina Tyk will be offered to help our teachers improve their own teaching skills, with Irina offering her support in kind to the project as a whole for those faced with practical questions about how to help those most struggling.

We feel this year has been a success for the refocused Stationers' schools, which have met the aims of the foundation, and in fact have altered the way we assess all children, across all schools, with a new focus on those who definitely need extra educational support and whom will benefit from the charitably funded tuition we offer.



The new school year 2018/19: our focus



This coming year will see another large intake of new children to Civitas Schools across London, and about half the children at both Stationers' schools will be new this year. As with the school year just gone, we know that settling so many new children into our schools will require us to focus on behaviour and classroom discipline in the first half of the autumn term, embedding good behaviour and learning practice in order to create the calm and focussed environment our children need given the relatively short period of time our teachers have with them (as little as 35 hours a year).

Our teaching cohort at the two schools remains relatively stable, although we were sad to lose lead teacher Chloe Meyronnet to her career this year. Amna Siddiqui, who has taught with us for five years and specialised in teaching at support level, will take over from Chloe as the lead teacher at Somers Town Stationers' School; Sarah Boyes remains the lead teacher at King's Cross Stationers'. Both teachers have and will continue to work with the project director to ensure we meet the aims and aspirations of the Stationers' schools and constantly review and update what we are doing to ensure we offer the best support we can to the children.

The Stationers' schools teachers for 2018/19 will be:

(at Somers Town Stationers') **Amna Siddiqui**, who works for *Médecins Sans Frontières* full time and who leads two of our schools; **In Meng Lam**, UCL economics graduate and private tutor; **Amy Edmondson**, a former Civitas Schools teacher who's returned to work with us this year; and finally newcomer **Sara Stillwell**, a Cambridge graduate with overseas teaching experience, including of refugee children in Greece in 2016-17.

(at King's Cross Stationers') **Sarah Boyes**, our education advisor and a Civitas Schools teacher of eleven years, Sarah is a private tutor and a Cambridge classic graduate; **Jenna Corderoy**, another longstanding teacher who leads at a number of our schools, as well as being a law graduate and is currently a freelance writer and researcher; **Waleed Mir**, who also teaches at multiple schools with us and who is undertaking his masters at SOAS; and new teacher **Adil Mian**, a physics undergraduate at Queen Mary London and aspiring photographer.



Following last year's first term focus on handwriting across all schools, we will repeat this aspect of our teaching again this autumn to ensure children have the ability to express thoughts and answers on paper legibly, making their future writing, and expression of their ideas, much clearer. We will also continue our focus on the mastery of times-tables to allow children to be ready for more complicated mathematics as their education progresses. Times-tables are the foundation for multiplication and long division, and the more readily able children are to draw on this knowledge the less challenging future mathematical challenges will be.

In your autumn report (due in January 2019) we will be able to share with you annual attainment comparisons (for children still with us since last autumn) now we have regularised our annual computerised testing. Every child will be tested using Durham University's InCAS system, to determine age attainment, combined with teacher led tests in school. The adaptive approach of the InCAS system provides each child with a personal assessment, showing age-equivalent scores, allowing us to compare each pupil with the national average, as well as with children in the same Civitas Schools.

It's important to state that these tests are simply a way of us measuring how we are helping the children each year, and what specific areas we may need to focus on in the future – they are not the purpose of what we do, nor does any Civitas Schools teacher 'teach to the test'. We have the luxury, as a supplementary school, of not having to teach for SATs, and to do so would be contrary to what we are trying to achieve: the passing on of essential knowledge from teacher to child, and each child truly grasping the concepts and ideas we present to them. Only then are they really able to think and learn for themselves.