



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
ALDERWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	Alderwood Primary School
Head teacher/Principal:	Katie Cutajar and Natasha Tilley
Hub:	Inspire
School type:	Primary academy
MAT (if applicable):	Compass

Estimate at this QA Review:	GOOD
Date of this Review:	04/01/2019
Estimate at last QA Review	N/A
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	14/06/2016



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Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising of host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

School Improvement Strategies	OUTSTANDING
Outcomes for Pupils	GOOD
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	GOOD
Area of Excellence The environment for learning	ACCREDITED
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	N/A
Overall Estimate	GOOD

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

1. Context and character of the school

- Alderwood Primary is a small primary school with a Designated Specialist Provision for eight children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). It has one form of entry but the roll is falling and classes are not full.
- The school is part of the Compass Partnership of Schools which converted to a MAT in July 2017. There are seven schools in the Partnership.
- Half of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other smaller groups are Any Other White, Black or Black British-African, Black or Black British—any other Black, and Asian.
- The school serves an area of very high deprivation. It is in the top 20% of all schools for the proportion of disadvantaged pupils. It is also in the top 20% of all schools for the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education health care plan.
- The school was judged to be requiring improvement by Ofsted in June 2016. The school has not been judged good since 2006.
- There are two co-headteachers in the school. Both are supporting a primary school in Medway. There is an executive headteacher who is responsible for teaching and learning across the MAT. She is also executive headteacher at another school in the MAT which has been judged to be outstanding by Ofsted.
- The school prides itself as a values-based school. The core values of the school are prominently displayed.
- The school has achieved the Quality Mark for the Early Years, the Bronze School Games Mark and the silver award for sustainable travel.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- This was the first review for the school.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Leaders have the highest of expectations for their pupils. The drive for excellence has brought about significant and rapid improvements in the school since the last Ofsted inspection, and a transformation of school culture.
- There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils trust their teachers to do the best for them. Pupils can talk about the values of the school.

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They know their pupils and staff well. The school has identified clear priorities for further improvement. Progress against priorities in the school development plan is checked on a regular basis at senior leadership meetings. This informs the weekly professional development meetings for staff.
- There is strong support for the professional development of staff, including the learning support assistants. There are many opportunities to share good practice across the MAT, for example through subject leader meetings. There are particularly close working relationships with an outstanding school.
- Staff are provided with a pedagogical framework in a written booklet. This provides them with very clear guidance in a form which can be easily understood and used in planning. It also promotes a certain degree of consistency of practice across the school. However, staff are also encouraged to try out their own ideas and to engage in and learn from educational research.
- The rich and broad curriculum is a real strength of the school. The whole-school projects provide opportunities for the sharing of ideas. Sport, music and art are all strengths. All pupils, for example, learn to play the ukulele. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. There are many exciting trips and visits linked to the curriculum.
- Leadership in the specialist provision and the early years is very strong, so that pupils make excellent progress in these areas of the school.
- A raft of initiatives has improved attendance. The high rate of persistent absence in the school is related to medical need, in particular of some pupils in the specialist provision. The work of the family support worker and learning mentor, among other strategies, has further developed the partnership with parents.
- The sharp focus on teaching and learning is improving progress cross the school. In every subject, progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 moved up at least one quintile in 2018. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving. Progress for these pupils also moved up at least one quintile in 2018. In mathematics, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was better than the progress made overall.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...the skills of middle leaders were further developed so that they make rigorous and accurate assessments of the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility, and use these to drive forward further improvements.

3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Progress from previous EBIs

- This was the first review for the school.

3.2 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - What went well

- The quality of the display of pupils' work throughout the school is exceptional. This is recognised as an area of excellence in this report.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and want to do well. They are very proud of their school and of their work. The standard of presentation and handwriting is very high.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and no time is lost in managing behaviour or transitions between activities. There are well established classroom routines. The majority engage with enthusiasm in the tasks set. For example, in a Year 1 phonics lesson the excitement of the pupils in demonstrating their understanding was palpable.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults are excellent. All show trust and respect. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and see this as an important part of learning.
- The strong team of additional adults provide good support for pupils in lessons and in the specialist provision. They work well in partnership with the teachers.
- Teaching in the specialist provision is sharply focused on the particular needs of each individual pupil. As a result, pupils make strong progress.
- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a range of different challenging and fun activities for the children and use the spaces well to provide a secure and stimulating learning environment. Adults are skilled in working with small groups and individuals to promote language and social development. In the Nursery, the teacher was working with a small group who were playing with building bricks and tools. She was modelling to demonstrate the meanings of the words she was teaching them.
- Teachers consistently follow the school feedback and marking policy. There is evidence in pupils' books that the marking is promoting good progress.
- Many examples of effective questioning were seen during the review. Teachers target their questions to check understanding and prior learning and also to challenge pupils to develop their thinking.
- Pupils talk about their work sensibly together and share their ideas. In a Year 4 history lesson, the pupils discussed their ideas about artefacts and then were challenged through skilful questioning to develop and articulate their thinking. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, there was a well-planned sequence of activities. Pair and group discussion was followed by some effective questioning to promote reasoning and problem solving.
- Scrutiny of writing in books showed that the older pupils are able to write at length. The environment is rich with opportunities for reading, with a wide variety of high-quality texts readily available. There are examples of pupils' writing on display throughout the corridors, open spaces and classrooms.
- Teachers have built opportunities to develop metacognition into their planning and a number of examples of metacognitive strategies were seen in use during the review.

3.3 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Even better if...

...all teachers were confident in reshaping lessons when this is required in order to maintain or change the pace of learning.

...all teachers consistently planned tasks which were appropriately matched to the needs of all learners.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Children enter the Nursery and Reception with knowledge and skills which are typically well below expectations for their age. They make excellent progress throughout their time in the early years. The proportions achieving a good level of development by the end of reception have been above the national averages for the last three years.
- The teaching of phonics is skilled and effective. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics test was above average in 2018.
- At Key Stage 1 the proportions achieving expected standard and greater depth in reading, in writing and in mathematics were all below average in 2018. The proportion achieving expected standard in the combined measure was equal to the national average, although the proportion achieving greater depth was below. The cohort consisted of 25 pupils so each pupil counted for 4%. When three pupils with very specific needs are removed from the data, the proportion achieving expected progress in reading and in writing was above average. There are quite high levels of mobility in the school and this had an impact on the published outcomes.
- There have been significant improvements in outcomes at Key Stage 2 since the Ofsted inspection. In 2018, the proportions achieving expected standard was above average in all subjects. It was well above average in the combined measure. The proportions reaching the higher standard in writing and in mathematics were also well above average. The proportion achieving the higher standard in reading remained below average.
- In science, the proportion reaching expected standard was just below average at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 was just above.
- In 2018 progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 was in the top quintile for mathematics, the second quintile for writing and the fourth quintile for reading.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is lower than that of their non-disadvantaged classmates. In writing they made less progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. However, in some classes, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than non-disadvantaged. In every subject progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 moved up at least one quintile in 2018.
- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities make good progress in the school and in the specialist provision because of the strong support they receive.

- Girls achieve better than boys in all year groups. The school has conducted an analysis of the data which shows that more of the boys have additional vulnerabilities
- Information gathered during the review indicated that the majority of pupils currently in the school are making good progress over time in their different subjects.

5. Area of Excellence

Environment for Learning.

Accredited.

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

The review team suggested during the review that the school should submit the environment for learning as an area of excellence. The quality of display work throughout the school is exceptional.

The school uses the learning environment to drive expectations. It is central to raising standards in the context of a rich and varied curriculum. It underpins the relationships in the school and is part of the intrinsic reward experienced by members of the learning community. Leaders believe that the rich and awe-inspiring learning environment secures exemplary behaviour from the pupils and makes the most vulnerable pupils feel safe and secure. The high quality of the work on display contributes to the sense of pride every child has in their school.

The school has supported a number of other schools in developing expertise in this area. For example, they have offered bespoke professional development, on whole school projects, art workshops, teaching sequences. editing and publishing.

5.2 What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

The school worked initially with an outstanding school in the MAT to learn from their excellent practice. Visits to the school were followed by whole school INSET. There is clear written guidance for teachers about how to develop the learning environment. This includes guidance around displays, book corners, outdoor provision, interest tables, communal areas, core routines and learning walls. There are a large number of outstanding displays in every corner of the school, so there are many high-quality examples to follow. Teachers are encouraged to use their findings from educational research to develop their practice. A number of the displays illustrate metacognitive strategies and growth mind-set which are areas of focus for the school improvement. There are regular whole school projects which promote team work and help develop an understanding of the sequence of learning across the school. These projects result in exciting displays which showcase the development of knowledge and skills.

The school has used outside companies where possible to support their work. One example is the Architecture in Schools project where two classes worked with an architecture firm to fulfil the brief of a Shared Space. The resulting display is inspirational.

5.3 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

The outcomes for pupils have risen significantly over time and this is in part because of the clear guidance given to teachers around developing the learning environment. The published learning outcomes are evidence of carefully planned learning journeys within immersive and exciting contexts. Pupils and staff have high expectations of themselves and of others. Independence and autonomy are promoted by effective use of space.

5.4 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Names: Katie Cutajar and Natasha Tilley

Title: Co-headteachers

Email: kcutajar@alderwood.compassps.uk; ntilley@alderwood.compassps.uk



6. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

The school does not require any further support from Challenge Partners at this time. It has a strong support network through the MAT.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.