



QUALITY ASSURANCE
REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
HIGHBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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| Name of School: | Highbury Primary School |
| Head teacher/Principal: | Mrs Sarah Sadler |
| Hub: | Mary Rose |
| School type: | Primary |
| MAT (if applicable): | University of Chichester Academy Trust |

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| Estimate at this QA Review: | OUTSTANDING |
| Date of this Review: | 05/11/2018 |
| Estimate at last QA Review | OUTSTANDING |
| Date of last QA Review | 12/03/2018 |
| Grade at last Ofsted inspection: | GOOD |
| Date of last Ofsted inspection: | 24/10/2012 |

Quality Assurance Review

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

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| School Improvement Strategies | OUTSTANDING |
| Outcomes for Pupils | GOOD |
| Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment | OUTSTANDING |
| Area of Excellence | Talk for Writing DEVELOPING |
| Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence | Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (2017) |
| Overall Estimate | OUTSTANDING |

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

- Highbury Primary is an over-subscribed, growing two-form entry primary school. Pupils come from areas that are amongst the most deprived both locally as well as nationally. The school has a large Nursery and takes in children from as young as six months old.
- The school's mission is to 'be an inclusive, safe and caring community where each member is equally valued and nurtured to develop their potential'. An example of this is the pre- and post-school care that is offered, as well as the extensive range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average.
- The school experiences a considerable degree of mobility of pupils who join or leave during the course of the school year. Last year, more than one in ten pupils joined or left the school.
- The school was awarded the Gold Artsmark in April 2018. Assessors commented that 'the vibrancy of the arts and the range of the offer are commendable'.
- Highbury Primary School joined the University of Chichester Academy Trust (MAT) in Summer 2017. Teachers work very closely with both partner schools in the MAT, as well as with other local schools, on developing the curriculum. They also moderate pupils' outcomes.
- The weekly 'Highbury University' ensures that pupils from across different year groups work together as they develop different skills and attributes.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- Leaders have started to align their evaluation reports and plans for improvement more closely. Further work needs to be undertaken to refine subject specific improvement plans with the whole school plan.
- Leaders are continuing to refine the way that individual targets are measured.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The commitment of both leaders and teachers to improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences and their subsequent life chances is impressive. Teachers are reflective and innovative practitioners.

- Leaders have created a research-led culture of continuing professional development (CPD). Seven members of staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher have completed an MA, which was taught at the school. A number of other staff have or are currently undertaking nationally recognised qualifications as either subject or middle leaders.
- The on-going training of teaching assistants (TAs) is given an equally high priority as that of teachers. They attend the same CPD as teachers. In addition there is a weekly dedicated training session for TAs.
- Teachers belong to either a mathematics or English research and development group. They review national and international evidence before considering what initiatives may enhance their current provision. These are always trialled and evaluated on a small scale before being considered for wider implementation.
- 'Talk for Writing' is a real strength right across the school from the Nursery to Year 6. Strong leadership, as well as training and support for all teachers and TAs, is the reason for this. Over the past three years, a greater proportion of pupils have met both the expected standard and greater depth in writing at the end of Year 6 than the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils attaining at the expected standard has improved considerably, such that they are in-line with other pupils nationally. Lead teachers are involved in outreach work supporting other schools to improve their writing outcomes.
- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) identified the need to improve the accuracy of their assessments of children joining the school. They now hold sessions with a range of local schools to moderate each other's judgements.
- TAs lead a range of activities as part of the 'Highbury University'. This involves delivering sessions for pupils from across different year groups. Pupils said how much they enjoyed being able to choose what activities they take part in.
- The curriculum has been designed to ensure that pupils take responsibility for their learning. Pupils routinely identify a theme or a person that they would like to research as part of the larger topic being studied. They also have to consider the audience that they will be presenting their findings to. Trips to places of religious, historic or geographic importance, as well as meeting visitors in school, all contribute to pupils' learning experiences.
- The involvement of parents in their child's progress is improving as a result of the termly pupil-and-parents conference. This is also having a positive impact on improving pupils' engagement in their learning.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...there were closer links between the school's overall 'journey to excellence plan' and subject action plans

...subject evaluation reports had a sharper focus on the strengths and areas for improvement regarding the quality of teaching and learning.

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

- Pupils of all abilities are given greater independence to decide the direction of their learning. They work very well together, supporting and sharing ideas. They routinely decide how to present their findings and consider their intended audience.
- The impact on pupils' learning is noticeable when teachers model possible ways they can respond to their tasks. This good practice would benefit from being shared more widely to all teachers and TAs.

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

- Pupils enjoy learning and have a thirst for knowledge. They are very courteous and show great respect when listening to one another's contributions. They enjoy the opportunities they have for taking ownership of their learning. This includes being able to learn about people, places and topics that interest them. This all helps to develop their resilience and their ability to learn from past mistakes.
- Where teaching is good or better, teachers make very good use of modelling, as well as the use of visual images, to clarify and support pupils' understanding. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to build pupils' vocabulary.
- In a Reception mathematics lesson, the teacher modelled repeating patterns using a range of mathematical language. This meant that all children had a very good understanding of what a repeating pattern was. Using resources provided by the teacher, they were then able to create their own patterns. Similarly in a Year 6 art lesson, as a result of very good modelling by the teacher, all pupils could explain what complementary colours were.
- 'Talk for Writing' continues to have a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' writing from the Nursery through to Year 6. The 'S' planning approach, which all teachers and TAs have had training in, allows for flexible planning. This is ensuring that the most disadvantaged pupils are always given tasks that challenge and engage them. To support pupils writing, all disadvantaged pupils read at least four times a week with an adult.
- Along with the impact of high quality TAs, Accelerated Reader is being used to reinforce the importance of pupils' reading skills. By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2018, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who met the expected standard in reading was in line with other pupils nationally. This in turn was

above the national average.

- The rich curriculum provides pupils with many wonderful opportunities to develop their writing skills. Pupils in Year 6 were confidently using fronted adverbials, clauses, prepositions and figurative language. They enjoy being given the choice as to what to write about. They are becoming skilled at editing their written work and talk about how this improves as a result of assessing their own and each other's work.
- Questioning is used very effectively by teachers to assess pupils' understanding. In a Year 6 English lesson, the judicious use of probing questions led to pupils not only being able to edit their writing, but also to enhance it. They were also able to make better choices concerning vocabulary.

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

...teachers adopt the same very high levels of challenge to all subjects that they apply to pupils' writing.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Children join the EYFS with language and communication skills well below what is typical for their age. They make good progress through to the end of Reception. The proportion of children who attained a good level of development has been in line with the national average for the past three years.
- Leaders have created a very warm, nurturing learning environment. For example, adults were using activities in the outside areas to reinforce mathematical vocabulary. Children have the most positive of starts to their education at Highbury Primary.
- The school's 'on the bus' approach to the weekly monitoring of all pupils' progress is rigorous. Staff treat each child as an individual and assess their unique needs. Central to this approach is to ensure that every child is 'on the bus'. Once secure, leaders and teachers work together to identify strategies that might support a child to move up to the top deck – the highest level.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics has been above the national average for the past three years.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, for the past three years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics has increased year on year. This has also been the case for the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. In 2018, outcomes were in line with the national average.

- Current Year 6 pupils are on track to match these outcomes. As a result, they are being well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- A consistent focus on reading has contributed to pupils' positive outcomes. The use of Accelerated Reader, along with targeted interventions, has had a significant impact on those pupils who lacked enthusiasm for reading or the opportunity to read at home. Many pupils spoke of their love of reading and how they enjoy making the most of the school's very attractive library.
- Pupils' outcomes in writing are improving as they progress through the school. This is a consequence of improvements in their reading skills as well as the ongoing impact of the school-wide 'Talk for Writing' programme.
- The school parliament and the eco-council enable pupils to work closely with those from different year groups. They discuss and reflect on important matters such as energy conservation. Pupils are rightly proud of the contribution they make both to their own lives and to those of others. This also includes being involved in a range of charitable projects, all of which make a very positive contribution to the school's mission.

5. Area of Excellence

Talk for Writing

5.1 How is this area developing to be a strength?

Leaders are rightly proud of the improvements that have been made to pupils' writing in recent years. They are ambitious in their drive for sustained improvements. They recognise that too few disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1, and too few boys reached greater depth at the end of Key Stage 2. They are working hard to evaluate the impact that all interventions have. This is to ensure that irrespective of their starting points, all pupils make good progress.

5.2 What actions is the school taking to grow expertise in this area?

The English research and development group will continue to monitor and explore current research and best practice.

The school has two aims:

- 1) to develop the quality of writing
- 2) to target interventions to remove barriers to learning.

Leaders have identified a number of strategies to support these aims.

Teachers are planning to continue to support the development of 'Talk for Writing' in other schools as well as to welcome teachers and leaders to observe practice at Highbury Primary.

5.3 What are the next steps to work towards accredited status next year?

- Include more evidence of the impact of the school's work with other schools. This could include feedback and evaluation from teachers that staff have worked with in other schools as well as from leaders and teachers who visit to observe 'Talk for Writing' at Highbury Primary. Similarly, over time, it could also include pupil progress data from schools in which significant contributions to CPD have been made.
- Develop greater clarity as to what a leadership development day would focus on, along with the intended learning outcomes for participants. Given the strong links that exist with schools in the MAT, this could include hosting a local development day. This would enable leaders to evaluate the impact of the day's activities as well as the key learning messages.

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

Leaders wanted time to reflect on the specific foci of their submission. They also wanted to consider the possibilities of working with teachers both from their MAT as well as with the Challenge Partners hub on a leadership development day.

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.