
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	Highbury Primary School
School Address:	Dovercourt Road, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 2RZ
Hub:	Mary Rose

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Unique Reference Number:	116196
Local Authority:	Portsmouth
Type of School:	Primary
School Category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	2 - 11
Number on roll:	338
Head teacher/Principal:	Sarah Sadler

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	24-25 October 2012
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	15 – 17 March 2017
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES¹

School Improvement Strategies: Outstanding

Outcomes for Pupils: Good

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Outstanding

Area of Excellence: Confirmed and valid for 3 years

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Emotional development

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that appears to be at the top of the Good grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted and is working towards Outstanding.

1. 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.

Information about the school

- Highbury is a larger than average primary school located within a deprived area in the city of Portsmouth.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average and increasing year on year.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, together with her dynamic leadership team, ensures that Highbury pupils are at the heart of the school's work. This results in exceptional provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Staff and pupils are valued as individuals, creating an exciting learning environment where success is expected and achieved. Pupils enjoy unique opportunities that add value to their current educational experience and improve their life chances for the future. The culture is one of continuous self-reflection and aspirations for every pupil to reach their potential.
- Leaders are involved in a wide range of local and national programmes that demonstrate how outward looking the school is. The deputy head teacher is a facilitator for the Portsmouth Teaching Alliance Outstanding and Improving Teacher programmes. The Pastoral Team led on the first Nurture Network committee in Portsmouth and their work in school has a significant impact on pupils' SMSC development.
- The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a document that shapes the school's improvement journey, providing leaders with clarity, direction and pace and involving all stakeholders so that everyone has their say. Core group staff meetings ensure that both impact and progress are measured and RAG-rated so that the SIP is an on-going, useful working document.
- Teaching across the school is highly effective, enabling all pupils to make good progress through interesting, cross-curricular activities. This quality is achieved because the school's excellent continuing professional learning (CPL) meets the needs of the whole staff, including the skilled support staff who coach each other and receive bespoke training.

- Examples of successful CPL include Talk for Writing training and mathematics training which has helped to develop teachers as leaders. Work with Chichester University has enabled teachers to undertake Masters degrees. The impact has resulted in improvements in areas of research, including the love of reading, attendance and attitudes to learning. For example, low baseline scores for 'I am happy and confident to share my learning in class' are now much improved as a result of leaders' action research.
- Leaders track pupils' progress meticulously through pupil progress meetings involving the headteacher, class teachers and phase leaders, using the information to plan interventions. The assessment information is used along with triangulation of books, discussions, observations etc. to enable reports to be generated with next steps. The 'barriers to learning' document is part of the pupil progress meetings and interventions are monitored weekly using a simple colour coding system. This demonstrates how the barriers for learning are overcome, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- The rigorous monitoring cycle empowers leaders at all levels to be responsible and proactive. Leaders independently produce monitoring reports, thus increasing their accountability and furthering their leadership skills.
- The bespoke, broad and balanced curriculum promotes and achieves inclusivity. This is The Year of The Sparkle where the aim is to inspire every pupil to learn. It provides memorable experiences that pupils would not otherwise experience. For example, having chips and ice cream on the beach provoked awe and wonder for younger pupils. Teaching assistants lead a range of Highbury University activities and extra-curricular clubs add even more variety.

Even Better If ...

... any differences in the achievement of groups was diminished.

... more pupils achieved the higher levels.

Pupil Outcomes

- From low starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development (GLD) was above the national average in 2016 as a result of effective teaching. Successful transition from Nursery to YR and bespoke Play to Learn sessions every morning and afternoon helped to close achievement gaps identified from tracking, enabling free flow activities between Nursery and YR to match the needs of every child. Children are currently making good progress in the EYFS as a result of effective provision that enables each child to play, explore and learn within an exciting learning environment. The tadpoles and newly-hatched chicks fascinated the children!

- As a result of effective phonics teaching, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Y1 phonics check in 2016 was above the national average, especially for EAL pupils and girls. Those who need extra support catch up in Year 2 as a result of leaders' actions, including employing an extra teaching assistant for one session a day and one-to-one support. These good outcomes are also due to effective CPL for phonics, opportunities for team teaching as well as increasing parents' understanding of phonics.
- Moderation of the KS1 results in 2016 resulted in pupils achieving above the national average at both age related expectations and at greater depth in mathematics, as a result of effective pupil conferencing and a robust evidence base for every child for moderation. Pupils achieved above the national average at age related expectations in reading and writing, above at greater depth in reading but below at greater depth in writing. In response, the school has rewritten the Talk for Writing strategies to reflect higher expectations and indications are more positive this year.
- Although 2016 outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 were disappointing for the school, gaps are closing and of the current Year 6 cohort, 65% are on track to achieve combined at age related expectations. This will be a distinct achievement as only a handful of the 22 Year 6 pupils do not fall into the disadvantaged, SEND and/or vulnerable categories.
- There is an overlap between pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special needs as 52% of SEND pupils fall into the disadvantaged category. 34% of pupils fall into all three categories of SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable.
- Gaps are closing as a result of weekly 'on the bus' discussions. This unique system provides a simple, but effective, way of tracking progress. Successful strategies that are accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils include the employment of a speech and language therapist one day a week and training in Talk Boost for all EYFS staff. Other strategies include teaching a high level of vocabulary, Word Capture and sensory spellings.
- More able pupils, known as the high-flying eagles, have opportunities to attend Portsmouth Grammar classes at weekends. Highbury teachers run the Flying High club once a week after school to challenge more able pupils' thinking. The Sparkle Club invites identified pupils so that creative and exciting activities can blend seamlessly with the reinforcement of basic skills.
- Learning observations, pupils' books and discussions indicate that current progress is good and, overall, pupils are on track to achieve age related expectations this year.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What Went Well

- Because reading is a key focus for the school, progress and attainment are rising. Pupils are raising money to buy a Reading Bus, which is arriving shortly. Every pupil in the whole school is a member of the local library and the school runs frequent visits for story telling and changing books.
- Teaching assistants are an asset to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Information from The Sutton Trust Endowment Fund research was used to achieve this high quality provision by targeting expertise to need and empowering support staff to be accountable for pupils' progress.
- Cross-curricular links and real life activities evoke genuine interest and enthusiasm. Transferrable skills build on previous progress. For instance, Philosophy for Children lessons enable younger pupils to debate higher level concepts such as respect. Forest School opens up new horizons for many pupils, especially those whose outdoor experiences are limited. One Year 5 boy described his experience of learning in the school grounds as, 'I just love being in the wild!'
- The culture of reading, writing and mathematics in the school is nurtured throughout the curriculum. Pupils enjoy reading for fun, immersing themselves in fictional worlds and also taking opportunities to enhance their subject knowledge.
- Pupils are immensely proud of their school. They said that best thing about Highbury is that 'the teachers make learning fun. It is never boring'. Pupils behave with courtesy and mutual respect, being excellent ambassadors for their school.
- Teachers understand and use the system of assessment and feedback very well across subjects and all year groups. Consequently, pupils know precisely how to improve their work and teachers have accurate information from which to plan and inform parents.
- Collaborative learning is well embedded and demonstrates pupils' support for each other. When one pupil became frustrated in an art lesson, a friend said, 'don't give up, keep trying'.
- Well-established routines result in excellent behaviour. Pupils are courteous and respectful. Relationships at all levels are highly positive and lead to full engagement in lessons and an eagerness to learn, as well as contributing to the exciting ethos that pervades the school.
- The purposeful learning environment aids pupil's understanding. The organisation of resources enables them to be easily and independently accessible so that the flow of learning is not interrupted. Pupils use the working walls to remind themselves of the talk for writing prompts and current newspaper clippings link learning to real life.
- Skilful questioning encourages pupils to reflect and early identification of misconceptions at the point of error reinforces understanding.
- Pupils' books show good progress and the positive impact of marking and feedback.

Even Better If...

... pupils had more opportunities to lead their own learning.

Quality of Area of Excellence

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development.

Why has this area been identified as a strength?

The school's vision is to be:

- an inclusive, safe and caring community where each member is equally valued and nurtured.
- to achieve academic excellence by ensuring each pupil has opportunities to develop their potential.
- to work together as a team with parents and carers within the community to promote rights, respect and responsibility for the benefit of all.

The strategic provision of SMSC has resulted in dramatic improvements in behaviour and well-being for staff and pupils as the school community works cohesively together. Pupil, staff and parent questionnaires show consistently positive attitudes to school. All staff provide a safe, caring environment where pupils flourish. The provision is wide ranging and permeates all areas of school. There is a consistent element of SMSC in the SIP; currently this is visiting other places of worship and the cultural element of the Artsmark. In addition, the SMSC leader's action plan is fully implemented and reported to the governing body annually.

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

There are so many actions that are influencing pupils' SMSC development that it is impossible to mention them all. The list is exhaustive and impressive. Links have been made and embedded with a wide range of external agencies, and the review team gathered secure evidence that these links demonstrated excellent impact on every aspect of SMSC.

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

Healthy School Award

Road Safety Award

Silver Eco-School Award

Tidy Schools Award

Fair Trade Status

Portsmouth in Bloom winners

Gold Sainsbury School Games

PE competitions

The Nurture Group has developed an excellent model across the school to help with significant behaviour and emotional well-being issues. Staff have trained and shared their expertise with all, they have attended regular network meetings in Portsmouth to share across the cluster/county. Places of Worship visits enable pupils to engage particularly well

with visiting other faith places of worship. They remember them and express a greater understanding of their friends' faith when back in school. This has supported greater tolerance and respect amongst children of other faiths. School and Eco Councils allow pupils to have a voice and feel valued. This promoted the British value of democracy and increased self-esteem and confidence amongst council members. Building Learning Power (BLP) enables pupils to develop their own learning style including creative ways to present their learning. A range of cultural weeks has allowed pupils to develop a greater understanding and respect of other faiths and cultures. Residential and Trips are many and frequent.

This wide range of life experiences that has been built into the curriculum has led to an improvement in associated vocabulary. There is a clear rise in aspirations amongst the pupils and families. Pupils and families show pride in attending Highbury and are keen to represent their school in a range of events. There is a general upward trend in progress and attainment across the school.

What is the name and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Sarah Sadler: ssadler@highbury-prim.portsmouth.sch.uk

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

Following discussion with the headteacher, the school would like:

The school would like to run an Immersion day to share their excellent SMSC practice.

Leaders would like to visit other schools whose pupils are leaders of their own learning and therefore demonstrate independence and initiative.

Following her recent participation in Springwell Junior School's review, the head teacher is arranging to visit.

The school is involved in the Challenge the Gap programme.

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.