



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR HALSTOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	Halstow Primary School
Head teacher/Principal:	Tom Gray
Hub:	Inspire
School type:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Compass Multi-Academy Trust

Estimate at this QA Review:	Outstanding
Date of this Review:	08/05/2019
Estimate at last QA Review	This is the school's first review.
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding at the last full inspection.
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	27/04/2007



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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	OUTSTANDING
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	OUTSTANDING
Area of Excellence	None submitted for this review.
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	N/A
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

- Halstow Primary School is an over-subscribed, large primary school in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The school's ongoing success has ensured that it has remained in the top 10% of primary schools in the borough.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is below the national average.
- White British is the predominant ethnic group in the school although many other ethnicities are represented, with nineteen different languages spoken. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below average, as is the proportion who have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is a member of the Compass Partnership of Schools and, in July 2017, joined the Compass Multi-Academy Trust. The school also co-leads the Royal Greenwich Teaching School Alliance.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- This is the school's first review.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The cohesive nature of the senior leadership team (SLT) is a striking feature of the school. They know their staff and pupils extremely well and their shared vision, orchestrated by the experienced headteacher, ensures they are solidly working towards providing the best possible experiences and opportunities for all pupils. The school continues to be a high-achieving school as a result of highly effective leadership.
- The school development plan is constructed through initial discussion with other stakeholders, followed by SLT meetings that decide the priorities required to sustain high levels of achievement, and also consider the wellbeing of staff. This approach maintains a harmonious team spirit that leads to teachers and other staff becoming more effective practitioners. The 'open door' policy also adds to increased self-belief in staff because they know that support is always available if needed.
- The organisation of split age-range classes works meritoriously because teachers are able to plan together effectively. Additionally, the nurturing ethos of the school is emphasised by enabling older pupils to take care of, and support, their younger peers in the classroom. This also extends to pupils challenging each other in their work.

- The prudent use of other adults in the classroom makes a categorical difference to pupils' learning. The support they provide makes a constructive contribution to pupils' development, which is largely down to the valuable training they receive within school, and in other trust schools. Eager to learn, knowledgeable students from local universities also make a positive impact in sustaining high-quality teaching and learning.
- The staff development programme is efficiently organised by senior leaders to ensure that the professional development needs of teachers and support staff are successfully met. This ensures that current issues are addressed, which leads to consistently high outcomes over time.
- Pupil progress meetings, led by senior leaders, are rigorous and supportive in equal measure. The requirements of the pupils in question are the main focus so leaders utilise a coaching-style model that enables teachers to raise attainment more effectually. Assessment methods are successful and, when triangulated with work in books, all staff have a heightened awareness of every pupil's progress.
- The curriculum has in-built flexibility and fluidity that reflects the changing national requirements as well as best meeting the needs of pupils. Visitors in school, as well as external trips, supplement and extend learning, which captures pupils' excitement and enables them to divert this enthusiasm into their work. To accommodate the context of the split classes, the two-year model is planned meticulously so that cross-curricular links are maximised. Leaders are confident that the curriculum is effective in sustaining the impressive outcomes the school achieves year-on-year.
- The focus on the wellbeing of all staff and pupils is a vital contributor to the school's success. There is a 'no blame' culture where everyone is supported in the knowledge that they can be adventurous in their teaching but know that support and understanding is always accessible.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...senior leaders further devolved responsibility to the middle leaders group in order to increase their accountability.

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

- This is the school's first review.

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

- Teaching and learning are strong across all year groups. This is undoubtedly a contributory factor to the sustained high quality outcomes the school has generated over the past few years. The consistency of strong practice is a common feature in all classrooms, as is the impact made by all additional adults.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and love coming to Halstow. This is borne out by the high attendance figures and is exemplified by a Year 4 girl's comment, "The best things about my school are the people and the atmosphere."
- Questioning is a strength. The Thinking for Thinking strategy is designed to enable pupils to articulate and build on their thinking. Through the utilisation of carefully structured questions, pupils are given plentiful opportunities to reflect on their ideas before answering. This was typically exemplified in a Year 3 and 4 English lesson.
- Challenge across all year groups is appropriate and evident. Teachers skilfully plan lessons that are exciting and involving. Differentiated and whole class teaching is employed in the correct context so that pupils' needs are fully met.
- Engagement is high in all year groups because the ambitious creativity of lesson content ensures that pupils remain fully focused on their work. This engenders universally positive attitudes to, and behaviour for, learning. Pupils are fervent, confident learners.
- Teachers exhibit strong subject knowledge and, through careful monitoring of learning, swiftly address any misconceptions pupils have. They scaffold and model learning effectively to enable pupils to achieve the learning intention.
- Teachers use advanced vocabulary at every opportunity and set high expectations for its use. In a Year R mathematics lesson, a boy correctly used the term 'pentagon' to describe a five-sided shape so the teacher taught the whole class the word. In a Year 1 and 2 English lesson, when a pupil was asked to use a synonym, he said, "he jumped as high as a star" but a girl quickly added, "That's not a synonym – that's a simile!"
- Teachers' high expectations encompass pupils' books, where presentation, particularly in English and mathematics books, is of a consistently notable standard. Progress is appropriate and rapid, which corresponds with the positive outcomes that are achieved.
- Senior leaders are highly supportive to staff who may be having difficulties or not sustaining consistently high quality teaching. They skilfully identify areas of need and actively help that teacher to overcome these issues. Opportunities to observing best practice by senior leaders going in to teach their class provides a positive model to follow. This methodology also helps newly-qualified staff to further develop their skills and enables them to maintain high level outcomes.
- The introduction of the notion of creating cognitive conflict in many lessons has had a positive impact on outcomes. The opportunities pupils are given to discuss, interpret and analyse lesson content results in greater understanding and importantly, increased engagement in their learning.

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

- ...teachers judged the pace of learning accurately to enable groups of pupils to commence their work sooner.
- ...the high levels of literacy and presentation in English and mathematics books were matched in foundation subject books.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Children enter the school from a range of local nursery settings and at broadly age-appropriate levels of development. Baseline assessments ensure staff have a clear understanding of their starting points so that progress throughout pupils' time at the school can be accurately charted. Children make strong progress by the end of Reception, with the percentage gaining a good level of development (GLD) well above the borough and national averages. This has been a consistent feature over the last three years.
- Performance in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above average in 2018, continuing the trend in this area. Almost all pupils who did not pass at the first attempt gained success by the end of Year 2.
- Results in Key Stage 1 were exceptionally high last year, with the expected and greater depth national averages comfortably exceeded in reading, writing and mathematics, and also in the combined measure.
- Progress measures in Key Stage 2 were commensurate with pupils' starting points, with reading and writing displaying positive values, while mathematics was just below; leaders are fully focused on raising progress in this subject. Attainment was exceptional, with scores well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at both standards. Likewise, average scaled scores in all three subjects were high. A similar pattern was seen in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test.
- Although pupils in vulnerable groups - disadvantaged, EAL, SEND - constitute relatively small numbers, they make sound progress from their individual starting points and their attainment is high.
- The large percentages of pupils at both key stages who achieve greater depth standards in all three subjects is testimony to the quality-first teaching they receive.
- Inconsistencies in boys' and girls' attainment suggest neither group is universally performing better than the other, although last year, boys did slightly better. Overall, both genders achieved well.

- The deputy headteacher effectively manages and monitors internal and external data. This enables her to highlight successes and areas that require attention in order to result in improvement. Pupils who are not on-track to meet expectations can be readily identified so that appropriate support can be swiftly implemented. The introduction of interventions as early as possible also ensures that pupils quickly catch up.
- The triangulation of learning observations, detailed work scrutiny and discussions with pupils provides supportive evidence of continued strong progress in all age groups. Current internal data suggests that results are set to remain high for attainment in all the 'headline' measures (GLD, phonics screening check and Key Stage 1 and 2 figures at expected and greater depth levels). The leaders' focus on progress is paying dividends so that the flight path from end of KS1 to 2 is becoming more linear, giving confidence that all three progress measures for reading, writing and mathematics will all have positive values this year.

5. Area of Excellence

None submitted for this review.

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

Leaders would like to link with other schools to develop computing.

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.