

## Written Report

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### CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

<b>Name of School:</b>	<b>Northside Primary School</b>
<b>School Address:</b>	2 Albert Street, North Finchley, London N12 8JP
<b>Hub School:</b>	The Compton

<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 8445 4730
<b>Email address:</b>	Head@northside.barnetmail.net

<b>Unique Reference Number:</b>	101296
<b>Local Authority:</b>	Barnet
<b>Type of School:</b>	Primary
<b>School Category:</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	3-11
<b>Number on roll:</b>	290
<b>Head teacher/Principal:</b>	Ms Gina Newman

<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	January 2009
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Outstanding

<b>Date of Quality Assurance Review:</b>	24-25 March 2015
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## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES

**School Improvement Strategies:** Outstanding

**Achievement is:** Outstanding

**Quality of Teaching:** Outstanding

**Area of Excellent Practice:**

**Early Years** Confirmed

### Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Northside Primary School appears to be firmly within the Outstanding grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted report of January 2009.

## Information about the school

- Northside Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups representing a wide range of heritages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, at a quarter, is above average.
- About a quarter of students are eligible for the pupil premium, which is average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave partway through the school year is much higher than usually found.

## School Improvement Strategies

### WWW

- The vision of outstanding teaching in every classroom and no missed opportunities for learning is clearly shared by all members of staff. Middle Leaders agree that the vision of the school, beyond pupil progress, is that of developing the whole child. It focuses on engaging children with learning, exposing them to the real world around them, celebrating not just academic success but developing wide-ranging skills.
- A consistent and rigorous monitoring schedule underpins the success of the team-working ethos in the school. Formal monitoring of the quality of teaching takes place regularly in a cycle. Planning and books are scrutinized and observations and learning walks take place. Senior and middle leaders are all involved in the cycle of monitoring. Results of the variety of monitoring are collated and triangulated. This enables accurate judgements to be made of the quality of teaching.
- Improvements in teaching are brought about in a number of ways, for example, team teaching and intense support in planning. Modelling by excellent practitioners also ensures that teachers know how to improve. If teachers do not improve with this support, they are moved on when necessary.
- The tracking system in place is simple and easy for staff to use. Teachers now involve themselves much more in the performance data and understand how they are held to account as a result. Leaders and teachers use the tracking system consistently to inform practice. Termly pupil progress meetings act as a springboard for conversation which paints a full picture of each pupil. This enables appropriate actions and a bespoke programme of intervention to be identified and put in place where required. As a result of these actions, gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils are closing.
- The SEF evaluates strengths and relative weaknesses clearly and states what actions are being taken to improve identified issues and whether they are working. In turn, subject leaders review whether their areas are improving twice a term. Impact statements are produced by middle leaders to demonstrate progress in their areas. These are followed by conversations with senior leaders about how well things have gone over the year. The school improvement plan is regularly reviewed and tweaked in light of actions completed and as a result of changing foci.

- The school is currently exploring different ways to ensure that the most able are challenged effectively. This is as a result of sharing good practice with other schools which has provided staff with strategies and techniques to use in their own classrooms.
- The quality of professional development and induction for all new staff is a real bonus. It is very well planned and tailored to need. Teachers receive mentoring and help with planning; support is intense but of excellent quality. There are numerous opportunities to watch good and outstanding practice both within and beyond the school. Staff are very supportive of each other and work collaboratively together to improve elements of their practice. The school is effective in developing their own teachers as a result.
- 'The Power of Reading' has been a very successful tool in promoting higher standards in reading.
- The 'Outstanding Teacher Programme' has made a real difference to the quality of teaching. Teachers have become facilitators themselves and this has had a great impact on keeping teaching at outstanding levels in the school and beyond.

### EBI...

- ...leaders continue to find ways to ensure that differentiation continues to be improved upon, particularly with regard to the most able pupils.

## **Pupil Achievement**

- Pupils reach high levels of attainment and make excellent rates of progress.
- Children join the school in the Nursery with a very low level of skills compared with those expected for their age. In the Early Years, good progress is being made with reading and mathematics although shape, space and measures is weaker than other areas. Over 85% of children made at least good progress in communication and language. By the end of Reception, 60% of children are on track to achieve a good level of development, a further improvement on the previous year.
- Pupils perform exceptionally well in the Year 1 phonics screening check and reach well above the expected standard. The few that do not pass the first time do so at their second attempt.
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 is broadly average with little variation between reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, boys outperformed girls but this gender gap is cohort related. Pupils who speak English as an additional language perform extremely well and there is little difference in attainment between them and their classmates.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is at least good across the core, although progress in writing is not quite as good as reading and mathematics.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach high standards of attainment. In 2014, pupils' attainment was significantly above average in reading, mathematics and SPaG. 90% of pupils achieve Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics and 43% achieve Level 5 across the core.

- The school has been amongst the top 5% of schools nationally for value added over time. Value added is strongest in reading and mathematics. The school is working diligently to improve the quality of pupils' writing so that progress is accelerated and standards rise. No groups of pupils underachieve.
- The proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected rates of progress is high in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils perform as well as their peers and outperform the national non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Current Year 6 pupils are making outstanding progress in all areas apart from writing where progress has been good. Results are set to be high again this year. Progress across the core in Years 2 to 5 is at least good although writing is a relatively weaker element. Progress in Year 1 is not quite as good as in other year groups.
- Pupils that speak English as an additional language (the majority) learn to read text, although their level of comprehension remains a challenge. Writing remains difficult as syntax and higher order understanding is difficult for them. In addition, there are issues with subject-specific vocabulary.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar have improved remarkably because training for teachers has had a huge impact on their practice, hence the huge jump in progress.

## Quality of teaching

### WWW

- The pace of learning during lessons is rapid. This is because pupils are completely engaged in their work through the effective use of a range of highly imaginative activities. For example, in phonics in Year 1, pupils played games, were encouraged to be competitive, contributed well to making new words and wrote words of their own. This had an excellent impact on their enjoyment, fostering both an ethos of excitement about learning and revealing real enthusiasm and commitment from all staff.
- Levels of engagement are high because teaching is stimulating and exciting. In Year 6, the tasting starter activity in Year 6 Literacy encouraged pupils to explore what a 'dry', unimaginative piece of writing might be like compared to a 'tasty', 'succulent' piece of writing. This resulted in pupils' excellent use of imaginative, descriptive language in well-formed sentences. In Year 1, the 'phonics fishing' activity in the magical and sparkling pond promoted high levels of interest and motivation.
- Highly effective modelling both by staff, other adults and by pupils was used to engage, develop thinking skills and to gauge understanding. In Year 5 French, the teacher clearly demonstrated the pronunciation of words. In Reception, the teacher modelled the sounds that made up words clearly, so that the children were able to apply these sounds to their own words easily.
- The planned deployment of additional adults and intervention contributes very effectively to the high impact in terms of rapid and sustained pupil progress. The Reading Recovery intervention was an excellent example of the impact of well-planned and skillfully delivered support. The varied activities were designed to engage the pupil and to move her forward in her learning through focusing on

specific areas of weakness. A high level of praise contributed well to an ethos in which making mistakes and 'taking risks' was accepted.

- Meticulous planning and well-prepared, imaginative resources contribute to high levels of achievement. The Year 5 French class used practical, kinesthetic and visual resources to excellent effect. In literacy and mathematics lessons, ICT was used to effectively model processes and to engage pupils with sound and images. In the Early Years it was used effectively to promote children's independence. In the Year 6 ICT session, pupils were keen and confident; they were encouraged to explore independently using 'Star cards' as aids, if necessary.
- Teachers and support staff skilfully question individuals and groups of pupils to address misconceptions and to deepen thinking and understanding. This worked well in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where pupils were investigating combinations of numbers which made a variety of totals.
- Marking is rigorous across the core but also in other subjects such as science. Teachers provided clear pointers for improvement.

### **EBI...**

- ...challenge for the most able was consistently evident throughout the duration of lessons.

### **Quality of Area of Excellent Practice**

- The Early Years environment is stimulating and engaging for the children because it is resourced exceptionally well. Children have many opportunities to apply the skills and knowledge taught in whole class and focused group teaching.
- The quality of questioning during focused activities is a strength. This, combined with practical resources including a variety of engaging models and toys, promoted excellent progress in counting in Reception.
- There are ample opportunities to apply reading and writing and numeracy skills during free flow. For example children doing a baking activity were counting how many eggs were in their cakes. Pupils had the opportunity to write a shopping list and wanted posters.
- The outside area is utilised very effectively. Large play equipment ensures there are opportunities to develop physical skills and children have opportunity to grow plants as part of their science work. Work is planned very carefully around a central topic and all activities link to this topic.
- There is a very strong team ethos evident. The Early Years team work hard to have positive relationships with parents and there is a dedicated parents' room. Regular formal and informal meetings are held with parents, and parents work with teachers to set pupil targets. There is a holistic approach. The impact of these positive relationships is seen in the rapid progress pupils make.
- The success of the Early Years is clearly evident in the rapid rate of learning seen in the Nursery and Reception. Planning formats and teaching styles used in the Early Years are used in Year 1 to ease transition. This works very well. Year 1 and Early Years staff observe each other and moderate work together. This smooth transition

has had a positive impact on attainment and progress. Highly effective behaviour systems are set up and modelled in the Early Years, which ensures all children are able to learn in a calm and organised environment.

- All staff have regular professional development. This has had a good impact on the high quality provision as evidenced in lesson observations and pupil progress. The Early Years team respond quickly to what the data shows, changing and adapting plans accordingly to meet the needs of the children.
- The Early Years has extra staff, as this allows children to have extra quality adult interaction with a focus on language development. The impact of this is seen in the progress in reading in particular. The Early Years leader and her team constantly update their knowledge and expertise by visiting other schools and implementing what they see back at Northside.
- EAL support is focused and bespoke and is highly effective at ensuring children acquire English quickly. The Early Years team work closely with the EAL team and are knowledgeable and very successful at closing the gaps quickly in written and spoken English because expectations are high and planning is careful. Children's progress is rigorously tracked and interventions are quickly put in place to support those who need it. Consequently, EAL children achieve as well as their peers.

## Partnerships

- The school has developed many partnerships which have had a clear impact on teaching and learning. The London School excellence fund partnership has led to improved teaching and moderation of reading and writing. Impact can clearly be seen in the improvement in the percentage of children gaining level 5 in reading and writing.
- Being part of the Compton teaching school alliance and the building of links with Middlesex University has led to improved teaching for EAL children and their families.
- The school has achieved the primary science quality mark after being part of a six school local authority project to develop science provision. This has had a positive impact on science teaching across the whole school. The quality of science work in the Year 1 books is testament to this.
- The Head teacher is an NLE and as part of this role, the school is involved in a multitude of local and national projects. This has developed the capacity of the school's senior and middle leaders as well as sharing the excellent practice of Northside with other schools.
- The school has developed a partnership with Oakleigh special school over many years. Currently, Year 4 pupils from both schools visit each other's school. This has directly improved pupils' understanding of equality, compassion and disability.
- The partnership with Meadowside old peoples' home has had an excellent impact on the development of a real community spirit. Each week children visit the home and work on various projects. Residents are invited to school productions and celebrations. Pupils are able to learn at first-hand about subjects such as World War Two, which improves their history knowledge.

**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.**

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

- The school will ask for support as and when necessary. Nothing has been requested for the moment.