
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	Northside Primary School
School Address:	Albert Street, London, N12 8JP.
Hub:	Compton

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Unique Reference Number:	101296
Local Authority:	Barnet
Type of School:	Primary
School Category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Number on roll:	291
Head teacher/Principal:	Gina Newman

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	29 January 2009
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	27-29 March 2017
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES¹

School Improvement Strategies:	Outstanding
Outcomes for Pupils:	Outstanding
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:	Outstanding
Area of Excellence:	Confirmed and valid for 3 years
Interventions for All	
Previously accredited Areas of Excellence:	
Outreach and support work, EYFS, EAL provision, Teaching and Learning.	

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.

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

- Northside Primary School is a slightly larger than average primary school situated in an area of moderate social deprivation in north London.
- There are more boys than girls in the school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is more than twice the national average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is more than three times the national average. The two largest groups are White British and other White backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is in line with the national average, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an Education Health Care plan is below average.
- The school's stability score is below the national average; more than expected numbers join or leave the school at other than the usual times.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- The headteacher and her dedicated senior leadership team (SLT) make a formidable, united team. Together, they relentlessly pursue the best opportunities for the pupils of Northside and inspire staff to produce the highest of outcomes. Their in-depth programme of interventions ensures that every pupil in the school has access to the most appropriate support that will lead to their success.
- All staff have ownership of the School Development Plan (SDP) and they have the chance to discuss and contribute to its construction. Subject and phase leaders have their own action plans that filter directly into the priorities on the SDP.
- The school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) demonstrates clear awareness of the progress that has been made, and still needs to be made, to ensure better outcomes across the key issues. This is updated and reviewed regularly. Middle leaders and governors contribute directly to the SEF, which increases their feelings of ownership of this document and adds to their accountability. Middle leaders are gaining in strength in their roles and are now empowered through the school's outreach programme to use their expertise to support other schools.
- SLT and subject leaders undertake joint observations, providing middle leaders with greater involvement in the monitoring of teaching and learning. Senior leaders also take the opportunity their annual Challenge Partners review affords them to add to the monitoring process. Plentiful book scrutinies and analysis of class data allow leaders to build up a profile of teachers, linked to performance management in

order to establish what Continuing Professional Development (CPD) they require. All teachers have opportunities to visit neighbouring schools to observe practice in a different setting, which also aids their development.

- Leaders have established a wide-ranging programme of inset and twilight CPD so that all teachers have access to a rich variety of in-house support. Many members of staff have undergone the Improving Teacher Programme and Outstanding Teacher Programme, gaining beneficial development from those sessions and giving them further leadership opportunities in their school.
- The school operates a pupil-led curriculum, undertaking compulsory elements of the national curriculum but allowing pupils to have a say in deciding other elements for their class. For example, chocolate in Year 4 and spies in Year 5. This really motivates pupils and stimulates creativity and enjoyment. Phase groups plan their curriculum content to occur at the same time, although the pupil-led aspects are scheduled at times to suit the teacher and the class.
- EBIs from previous Challenge Partners reviews have been fully addressed.

Even Better If ...

... leaders continued to explore methods to accelerate progress in Key Stage 1.

... leaders and class teachers continued their relentless pursuit to diminish any differences in achievement for groups of pupils.

Pupil Outcomes

- A large proportion of children enter the school with poor language skills and development that is below what would be typically expected. In September 2016, nearly two-thirds of children entering the Nursery had little English; the majority could not speak English at all.
- In 2016, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) was below the national average. This figure was similar for disadvantaged children.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check, pupils at Northside achieved an 80% pass rate, which is broadly in line with the national average.
- At Key Stage 1, for expected attainment, reading was broadly in line with the national average, as was writing, although mathematics was just below average. Attainment at greater depth was below average in reading and writing and no pupil gained success at this level in mathematics. The combined figure at Key Stage 1 was 56%, which was just below average. While attainment is close to, or just below the national average, the progress pupils make from very low starting points is exceptional, as is evidenced below.
- Key Stage 2 results were excellent and, at the expected level, Northside pupils were well above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and spelling,

punctuation and grammar (SPAG). At greater depth, reading, mathematics and SPAG were well above the national average.

- Girls' achievement was better than boys overall. Attainment for SEND pupils at Key Stage 1 was above the national averages, while at Key Stage 2, results for this group of pupils was significantly above average; 100% of pupils were above in reading and the figure was 75% for writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils generally performed at or just below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, but the excellent progress pupils make at Northside over time can be evidenced in the Key stage 2 results for this group. At the expected level, they achieved just below the national average but were well above in reading and SPAG. At the higher level, disadvantaged pupils were level with the national figure, just below in SPAG but were more than double in mathematics.
- GLD is predicted to exceed the 2016 level this summer, with 20% expected to gain the higher level. Phonics is expected to be higher than previously. At Key Stage 1, performance is on track to be better than the previous year, particularly with pupils predicted to achieve at greater depth. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are expected to exceed last year's high levels but with an emphasis on improvement in writing.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What Went Well

- Classrooms at Northside provide a stimulating learning environment for the pupils to expand their knowledge. They are bright learning spaces where pupils' work is celebrated. There are plentiful learning aids displayed to support pupils when they have difficulties. Rooms are well resourced and teachers exploit equipment to the full. This includes the use of ICT, which is used frequently to enhance learning and to provide a useful hook to stimulate pupils' thinking.
- Teachers use their extensive subject knowledge well to bring learning to life. Leaders reported that a good deal of CPD has been applied to this area of teaching, and this is clearly paying dividends in the classroom. Teachers also encourage pupils to use scientific or technical vocabulary at every opportunity, which extends their understanding.
- Pupils display excellent learning behaviours. They are enormously proud of their school and have a true sense of belonging; they love coming to Northside. This ensures that excellent behaviour is the norm and this contributes directly to the positive relationships that abound between teachers and pupils.
- Teachers use questioning effectively when probing pupils' understanding. Pupils are keen to share and discuss their learning with their peers and there is a true air of collaboration in classrooms. They are also happy to share their learning with visitors in the classroom and they took great delight in showing reviewers what they were learning.

- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education (SMSC) is a major strength of the school. The wide range of different cultures are celebrated across the school, and pupils said how much they enjoy learning about other countries, religions and cultures. The school's promotion of British values is equally strong, and this is evident in the many displays around the school. Pupils are able to gain 'stamps' in their Passport to Success which promote all round values.
- Children begin their Northside 'journey' in the EYFS, many with limited or no English but are made to feel at home by the warmth of the welcome. The Nursery and Reception classes are well-planned, highly resourced spaces. They are great places to learn and, under the guidance of the skilled leader of EYFS and the experienced staff, children get off to a flying start.
- In supporting the learning of every pupil, leaders drill down to the micro-level to ensure they can put the most appropriate intervention into place to support the learning and progress of an individual or small group of pupils. To assist them, there is a small 'army' of skilled teaching assistants and other key professionals, who are expertly deployed to boost progress.
- An in-depth scrutiny of pupils' books reveals the excellent progress pupils make over time. Work is frequently marked and the incisive feedback teachers provide allows pupils to make further progress.

Even Better If ...

... teachers explored other means of questioning in class rather than just 'hands-up' methods.

... teachers employed more AfL strategies to identify 'next steps' progress.

Quality of Area of Excellence

Interventions for all

Why has this area been identified as a strength?

The school has a relatively large proportion of pupils who have an identified educational special or physical need. In addition, the school has a very high proportion of EAL pupils. Leaders have focused a great deal of attention on improving the provision in school for these groups, such that they make excellent progress throughout their 'journey' at Northside. In 2016 at Key Stage 2, the attainment for SEND pupils was above the national benchmark in all areas, with a phenomenal 100% reaching the expected standard in reading. The performance of EAL pupils was similarly high. Leaders forensically analyse data to inform and support the appropriate interventions. The flexible use of timetabling and adjustments to the school day allows targeted interventions to be more effective and pupils spend as much time within the classroom as possible. Frequent and relevant training ensures that all staff have the skills needed to support these pupils effectively, with quality-first teaching a priority. A broad range of bespoke interventions and highly qualified support from different professionals ultimately leads to the success these pupils enjoy.

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

The school has employed specialist teachers to implement a plethora of interventions, for example, a dedicated mathematics teacher to lead the Numbers Count initiative and a qualified dyslexic specialist to support those students. There is also a wealth of experience within the staff to supplement outside agencies, who include speech and language therapists, the Autism Advisory team and an educational psychologist. These professionals have provided CPD in their respective fields, and there has also been extensive training for teachers and teaching assistants (TAs). Good practice is also shared through weekly meetings, and a speech and language therapist works with the school once a week. CPD has also included training on the use of ICT in the classroom to enhance the provision for identified groups and individuals. A wide range of after school, early morning and holiday time 'booster' sessions adds to the provision for these pupils, contributing directly to the excellent progress they make. The school has already supported a large number of schools in the area to help to advise them on their intervention provision, combining visits into their schools and hosting staff who seek guidance.

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

The Outcomes section of this report highlights the extent of the progress and attainment these pupils make on their Northside 'journey'. Those in receipt of interventions clearly make good or better progress and leave at the end of Key Stage 2 with attainment that is higher than the national average. The school's system for early identification of pupils who require support ensures that progress from one Key Stage to another is effective, maintaining a positive progress trajectory in most areas. The fact that the majority of pupils join the school with very poor command of English and yet finish with high levels of achievement, is testament to the quality of support they receive. In addition, the interventions that are fully embedded ensure that all pupils, no matter what their learning or behavioural difficulty, progress well. The holistic approach that leaders take involves all members of staff, who feel they have true ownership of the support they provide. Parents are extremely happy with the support their children receive, the attendance for these groups has risen dramatically, and the number of recorded behavioural incidents has reduced considerably.

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 to reflect further about what support they might like.

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.