
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	Knighton Fields Primary Academy
School Address:	Knighton Fields Road West, Leicester, LE2 6GL
Hub School:	Rushey Mead

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Unique Reference Number:	142848
Local Authority:	Leicester
Type of School:	Academy converter
School Category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Number on roll:	222
Head teacher/Principal:	Gary Aldred

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	N/A as this is a new academy
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	N/A

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	9-10 March 2017
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES

School Improvement Strategies: Good

Pupil Outcomes: Good

Quality of teaching, learning and Assessment: Good

Area of Excellence: Developing
Removing Barriers to Learning

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Knighton Fields Primary Academy appears to be just within the good grade and as a newly formed academy is improving rapidly.

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

- Knighton Fields Primary Academy became a converted Academy on 1 June 2016 and is part of the Rushey Mead Educational Trust.
- The academy is a smaller-than-average size primary academy situated to the south of Leicester.
- Most of the pupils are of white British heritage and the proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above that seen nationally.
- Mobility in and out of the academy is high as pupils leave and join the academy at different times of the year.
- The principal has only been at the academy for 6 months.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- The current principal has only been at the academy for 6 months but has set a very ambitious direction leading to it moving forward rapidly due to well-focused academy wide improvement strategies and a quest for excellence.
- In the short time that he has been at the academy, he has transformed expectations of staff, pupils and parents and is determined that all pupils will be competent learners achieving their full potential under his strong leadership.
- The academy's Development Plan is a comprehensive document compiled in collaboration with all members of staff. Because of this, all stake holders have ownership over the academy's areas for development and are aligned in their quest to meet the academy's identified targets. Action planning is amalgamated in the document giving a clear direction for leaders at all levels. Targets are taken from the most recent Ofsted report as well as issues identified through leaders' analysis of the academy's data and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Once an issue has been identified, support is put in place both from the principal and the Trust to ensure all staff are clear as to what they need to do to move forward. One clear example of this is the academy's changed approach to Continuing Professional Development. The principal and assistant principal ensure that all staff training is purposeful and linked to both performance management targets and issues identified in the academy's development plan.
- The academy's development plan rightly identifies all the necessary areas for accelerating pupils' progress from a low baseline. Through clarification, reciprocal reading is now securely embedded in Key Stage 2 and this is having a very positive impact on the pupils' skills of prediction, comprehension and evaluation of texts.

- Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and identifies the areas for improvement but does not always specifically focus on the progress of key groups in classes.
- The well-planned book based curriculum which uses class novels is a key feature in the teaching of English across the academy and is already having a very positive impact on both reading and writing. A wide range of quality interventions; such as, S&L, EAL and reading interventions is helping pupils with low prior attainment to improve their reading skills.
- Leaders track the progress of all groups of pupils through regular use of assessments and follow up all aspects of underachievement in well-focussed pupil progress meetings. Senior leaders add an extra layer of moderation by working with 6 pupils from each year group to support teacher judgements. In order to improve the proportion of pupils working at greater depth, their attainment is now tracked from their starting points ensuring that all pupils working above the expected standard can be targeted by members of staff.
- Senior leaders accurately and regularly monitor the quality of teaching through regular learning walks and book scrutinies. Regular moderation sessions are hosted by academies across the Trust and this provides teachers with an opportunity to work with staff from other academies in order to moderate their judgements.
- Lots of opportunities have been made by the senior leadership team to allow teachers to observe good and outstanding teaching in other academies and this has led to a change of culture in the academy where teachers are now themselves approaching the senior leadership team for Continuing Professional Development opportunities.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. All groups of pupils are carefully tracked to ensure that they are making at least good progress in relation to their starting points. The newly formed leadership team is growing both in experience and in capacity in evaluating the impact of provision on outcomes, and in ensuring that teachers meet the high and ambitious targets set by the principal in moving the academy to greater success.

Even Better If ...

... the evaluation of strategies aimed at improving progress occurred more regularly to ensure their effectiveness and impact on the progress of different groups, especially disadvantaged pupils.

... the academy developed further capacity of the middle leadership team to evaluate impact of provision on outcomes.

... the present systems of tracking data made more reference to the progress that different groups of pupils made in relation to their starting points.

... the monitoring of teaching and learning focused on the progress of identified groups.

Pupil Outcomes

- Although the academy is newly converted, data from the last academic year shows that the combined outcomes in Key Stage 2 were weak and that the academy did not meet floor standards in relation to attainment. Whilst attainment in mathematics and grammar were above national averages and writing was broadly in line, the underachievement in reading led to the combined attainment being below the national target. It also demonstrates that there was previously considerable underachievement and all groups of pupils, including pupil premium and SEND, did not make sufficient progress.
- Review findings show that based on in-house analysis of data there is an improving picture across the academy. Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes for 2016 showed that whilst pupils made good progress from their low starting points they nevertheless entered Year 1 below the expectations for children of this age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Present data shows that basic skills are improving and that next year pupils entering Year 1 will be better equipped to cope with the demands of the curriculum due to the present high emphasis placed on basic skills.
- The 2016 data demonstrates that in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils by the end of Year 2 attained the national expectations. Despite this, the progress data demonstrates that below average attaining pupils did not progress well enough in relation to their prior attainment.
- Since the appointment of the new principal and the school's academisation, there has been rapid improvement in the progress of different groups of pupils. The academy's in-house data shows that although the present Year 6 might not meet the expected age related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, all groups of pupils are nevertheless making good progress from their low starting points. This is especially the case for those pupils who are working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 because of the targeted support they are now receiving and the consistently outstanding teaching over time.
- The academy has ironed out the inconsistencies of inaccurate recording of data and now, with the help of the Rushey Mead Educational Trust, teachers are accurately evaluating pupils' progress and are teaching to age related expectations. This is having a positive impact on accelerating the rates of progress from pupils' different starting points. Gaps are starting to close and this is most apparent in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1, Year 5, and Year 6 where consistently strong teaching is helping diminish the differences. The impact of the well-planned continuous provision within the EYFS and Infant classes has helped children become actively engaged in purposeful learning.

- Pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons because their needs have been correctly identified and interventions have been put into place to work on their barriers to learning.
- Review findings show that despite several pockets of strength there are inconsistencies in some year groups pertaining to the challenge of the most able; particularly in mathematics, where too often these pupils spend too long practising skills rather than applying them to new problem solving situations. Disadvantaged pupils are catching up with their peers because of the extra interventions and multiple enrichment opportunities made available across the academy.
- Throughout the academy and in lessons, behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn and have a pride in the presentation of their work. They work well in groups and concentrate well in lessons. They value their teachers and all that is done for them; they are respectful, polite and proud to be pupils of Knighton Fields Primary Academy. Pupil voice is a driving force in improving the opportunities that pupils receive.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What Went Well

- The principal has brought about an invigorated drive to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve their full potential. He has set an excellent example for teaching as he himself teaches in Year 6 and, being a highly skilled practitioner, has led by example. This has resulted in raised teacher's expectations of what these pupils can do.
- In spite of the many barriers to learning that these pupils demonstrate, teachers are ensuring that they do all that they can to accelerate these pupils' rates of progress.
- From very low starting points and weak communication skills, teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a rich learning environment, both indoors and outdoors where pupils make rapid progress in improving their linguistic and mathematical skills.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of how young children learn and this is underpinned by a wide range of activities which develop pupils' multi-sensory skills; for example, pupils in Reception were excavating key words that were written on dinosaur bones. This had a very positive impact on boys' engagement in their learning.
- An improving feature of teaching is the targeted use of assessment in lessons and pupils developing skills of independence in assessing their own and others' work. This is helping pupils understand what is expected of them and helping them develop their skills of being reflective on the quality of their work; this was particularly evident in a Year 6 extended writing session where pupils identified several advanced grammatical features.

- A strong feature of teaching is the use of assessment to plan and teach age related expectations. Teachers take a holistic view of pupils' achievements by moderating their work and supporting their evaluations with evidence, which is discussed with colleagues in corresponding year groups across the Trust. This is having a positive impact on improving teachers' subject knowledge.
- The use of Continuing Professional Development, particularly in developing teachers questioning techniques, is having a positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers are asking challenging questions and facilitating pupils in thinking beyond the literal. This is having a positive impact on developing their skills of inference and deduction.
- Teachers teach basic skills well, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where the teaching of reading, using the skills of reciprocal reading, is having a very positive impact on pupils' understanding of texts, inference and deduction, prediction and acquisition of vocabulary.
- Throughout the academy, resources in mathematics are used very well to develop pupils' conceptual understanding and mathematical skills. This, in conjunction with the long standing approach of everyday calculations, is building the pupils' mathematical competence.

Even Better If ...

... teachers consistently gave further opportunities for higher attaining pupils to access more challenging work and staff moved pupils on in their learning more rapidly once pupils had demonstrated that they had grasped the concept taught.

... additional adults were consistently and effectively engaged when teachers were giving explanations to the whole class.

... teachers in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 consistently modelled writing for below average attaining pupils.

Quality of Area of Excellent Practice Removing Barriers to Learning

The review believes this is an area that is developing.

The academy has a large number of vulnerable children and provides a 'needs-led' tailored approach to ensure that children are ready to learn and access the curriculum. Staff are quick to identify children and families that would benefit from additional targeted support which has been swiftly put into place. Personalised interventions are planned to close academic gaps and maximise progress. By nurturing individual needs and through appropriate, social, emotional, mental health and behavioural support, children are able to access learning. Sessions such as Space Invaders, led by the learning mentor, enable some of the youngest children in the academy to develop positive attitudes for learning. Other

interventions such as, 'Breakfast Club' and 'Wake and Shake' are encouraging positive interactions with adults and peers.

There have been positive outcomes as a result of the work of this team. These include:

- Current data indicates a significant reduction in the number of exclusions;
- Improved attendance;
- Reduction in behavioural incidents;
- Increased parental involvements, especially of the 'hard to reach' parents;
- Increasing number of parents attending academy events and supporting their children's learning; and
- Improved communication with parents.

The academy's nurture provision is long standing and has been highlighted by outside agencies including, the LEA advisor for Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).

As a result of their in-house successes, the academy is keen to share provision for vulnerable pupils and their families with other academies within their Trust and beyond. In order to confirm the area of excellence, the academy would be advised to see what other schools do in this area to develop further innovative practices.

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.