



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR KNIGHTON MEAD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Name of School:	Knighton Mead Primary Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Rebecca Smith
Hub:	East Midlands South Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	The Mead Educational Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	The school has chosen not to have estimates for this review.
Date of this Review:	22/01/2024
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading
Date of last QA Review	30/01/2023
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	13/05/2019



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Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

School leaders have chosen not to have estimates for this review.

Leadership at all levels	Not applicable
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Quality of provision and outcomes	Not applicable
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AND

**Quality of provision and
outcomes for disadvantaged
pupils and pupils with additional
needs**

Area of excellence	Not applicable
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Previously accredited valid areas of excellence	Nurturing Exceptional Character in Pupils, 30/01/2023.
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Overall peer evaluation estimate	Not applicable
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***The Quality Assurance Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades.
The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is
developmental not judgmental.***

1. Context and character of the school

Knighton Mead Primary Academy is a one-form entry school, with its own nursery. It is situated in the city of Leicester and a popular choice in the locality.

The largest proportion of pupils are of White British heritage, although the demographic has changed notably in recent years, with the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) increasing markedly. Approximately half of the pupil body is classified as disadvantaged which is considerably higher than the national picture. However, school leaders are aware this number is probably much higher, due to families on the cusp of financial thresholds or new to the country and unable to claim support. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is also higher than the national average.

There have been considerable changes to the leadership team in recent times, alongside having several teachers who are quite early in their careers. The principal was appointed to the role at the start of this academic year, although had been a senior leader in the school for the previous ten years. The school is a member of the Mead Educational Trust and benefits from the many networking and development opportunities available for leaders, teachers, and support staff.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The principal has clearly settled quickly into her new role. She leads the school with passion and pragmatism, being ably supported by committed and enthusiastic senior leaders. It is notable that most leaders have been appointed internally, from within the school or across the wider trust, with considerable handover periods helping to smooth transitions. This has further ensured that the positive relationships with families and the local community, built up over many years, have been sustained.
- Adults and pupils speak warmly about the school's values of nurture, learn and achieve, which were evidenced well during the review. The values are enhanced by the character muscles which the school introduced some years ago to define behaviour for learning expectations. Focus on these attributes, such as independence, integrity and concentration, has proved very effective during lessons and when guiding pupils to self-regulate or to articulate their feelings.
- Leaders at all levels are actively involved in school improvement initiatives, with a collaborative approach taken to writing and reviewing strategic planning. This is enabling foundation subject leaders to develop their practice whilst understanding wider school priorities. Additional insight is provided by Key Stage 3 subject specialists from across the trust.

- The school is situated on a relatively small site with every available space, indoors and outside, utilised to best meet the learning needs of pupils. The learning environment has a friendly and welcoming ethos, with impressive displays showcasing the school's commitment to creativity. This leads to a positive climate for learning which pupils respond to enthusiastically.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, all of which are provided free of charge for all pupils. These include sports, music and a wild club where pupils make the very best of the outside space with gardening and ecological activities. Pupils' cultural capital is extended with many visits and visitors welcomed to the school, including regular links with community police officers, and with religious leaders and local places of worship for many world faiths. In addition, pupils gain valuable experience from taking on many leadership roles, such as reading corridor, eco and play leaders, and the primary leadership team (PLT) where class representatives from every year group are voted for by their peers. Notably, members of the PLT have recently returned from a visit to the Houses of Parliament. All such enrichment is helping prepare to pupils for their lives in modern Britain.
- Warm and purposeful relationships are apparent between all stakeholders. This community ethos is further exemplified in the class names, all of which relate to local streets. Each class will regularly walk to 'their' street and enjoy exploring the locality. Another dimension to this genuine, family-orientated philosophy is the 'everyone is welcome' culture, which permeates all of school life.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...

- ... subject leaders gained further experience of articulating their respective subject responsibilities.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Leaders and teachers have developed a curriculum which is bespoke to the school. This is well-embedded with a progressive, topic-based approach to the foundation subjects being linked to the enduring focus on the teaching and learning of English, which leaders have identified as essential due to the pupils' low starting points. Additional themes of social justice and sustainability are integral to the wider curriculum and link well with local priorities.
- Teachers and teaching assistants benefit from the carefully planned programme of continuing professional development (CPD), as exemplified by the teaching and learning excellence document which details the high expectations of all. Consequently, the subject knowledge of all adults is strong. Importantly, the entire staff team meets after each pupil progress

meeting to discuss the findings. This collaborative process means that all staff have clarity of the next steps identified for year groups and individuals, to further inform teaching and learning.

- A key feature of lessons is the emphasis on vocabulary. This has been a considered decision to equip pupils with the tools they need to function in school and wider society, together with the development of their oracy skills. During the review, the commitment to vocabulary acquisition was evidenced in all year groups. Progression was apparent as pupils explored key words in relation to comprehension activities at age-appropriate levels. For instance, Years 5 and 6 pupils showed much independence and effective dictionary skills as they wrote relevant sentences for the key vocabulary.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) focuses on communication and language, with word work explored throughout each day. During the review, a variety of challenges were enjoyed in the continuous provision. Careful questioning, the use of high-quality language, and close assessment by the skilled staff help to ensure children make rapid progress, which is reflected in the upward trends achieved at the end of the key stage.
- Phonics and early reading are taught consistently through a systematic programme which pupils respond to very well, as evidenced by the high outcomes achieved. Pupils who need additional input, including those with EAL, continue with an efficient extension programme into Key Stage 2.
- The emphasis on reading continues into later year groups, with the development of a love of reading at the heart of the curriculum. Through the range of high-quality texts available, links are made to other subjects whenever practicable. Pupils clearly value accessing the inviting reading corridor during lessons and at lunchtimes, with many books and seating areas available to all.
- A mastery approach is taken to the teaching and learning of mathematics, with an appropriate balance made between short-burst retrieval tasks and pupils exploring problems in different ways. Again, a focus on key vocabulary was evident in all classes. For example, in a purposeful Year 5 mathematics lesson, the use of sentence stems was well-established and clearly helped pupils to understand and articulate their learning.
- Pupils show excellent behaviour and attitudes to their learning in all classes. The stimulating and enjoyable learning climate is enhanced by Captain Stretch activities, with the expectation of challenge planned into every lesson and subject area.
- Attainment outcomes by the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than national averages. This is particularly impressive when considering the low starting points, high levels of disadvantage and the number of EAL pupils. Hence, pupils are prepared very effectively for the next stages of their education. Notably, predictions for 2024 are at similar levels.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

- ... all teachers took greater ownership of their own development and strived for excellence by learning from the best practice evident.
- ... teachers used modelling and scaffolding strategies more consistently to support pupils with their independent learning.
- ... oracy strategies were used more consistently across the school.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- The leader with responsibility for disadvantaged and EAL pupils is the principal which reflects the importance placed on securing the best possible provision for these vulnerable groups. The SENDCo is quite new to the school, although is very experienced and had a productive handover period with the previous long-serving SENDCo.
- In addition to the principal and SENDCo, the removing barriers to learning (RB2L) team includes the vice principal and the pastoral lead. The team meets fortnightly to discuss any concerns, behaviour or attendance trends; they clearly understand and meet the needs of every vulnerable pupil very effectively.
- Any pupils who need free access to the RB2L room are hosted by the pastoral lead. This is a delightful, calm and welcoming space, where pupils receive personalised support to enable them to access learning.
- The inclusive curriculum is adapted well to best meet the needs of SEND, disadvantaged and other vulnerable pupils. Initial emphasis is on quality first teaching in classes, with reasonable adjustments made and interventions when needed. These include reading and spelling intervention programmes which are proving very effective in diminishing gaps in learning.
- The academic and pastoral progress of pupils with SEND is tracked very carefully with the use of pupil outcome passports. This helps ensure there is early identification of any need.
- Teaching assistants are key members of the team, being highly skilled and deployed well in classes, working with individuals or small groups as appropriate.
- Generally, most disadvantaged pupils achieve higher assessment outcomes than national averages, with evidence showing that attainment gaps are diminished over time. Case studies indicate that most pupils with multiple vulnerabilities make significant progress from their individual starting points.
- The attendance of all groups of pupils, including those disadvantaged, is similar to national averages. This is due to the proactive stance taken by the staff team, and their high expectations of both attendance and punctuality.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

The team did not identify any areas for improvement for the school's provision.

5. Area of Excellence

Not applicable.

Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, we encourage you to share the main findings with your hub/hub manager so that they can support your hub's activity planning. Challenge Partners will also collate and analyse report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.

For further support following your QA Review, schools can access the School Support Directory; the Challenge Partners online tool that enables schools to connect with other schools in your hub and across the national network of schools.

Schools can also attend Sharing Leading Practice (SLP) events where schools showcase excellent and/or innovative practice. Sharing Leading Practice events allow school leaders with specific improvement needs to visit a school or attend an online webinar hosted by a school, with outstanding provision in that area.

Both the School Support Directory and the Shared Leading Practice events can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website. (<https://www.challengepartners.org/>)



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Finally, following the QA Review, schools may find it useful to refer to research such as the EEF toolkit to help inform their approach to tackling the EBIs identified in the report

(<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>)