



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW
REVIEW REPORT FOR
ABBAY HEY PRIMARY ACADEMY

Name of School:	Abbey Hey Primary Academy
Head teacher/Principal:	Paul Graham
Hub:	North West
School type:	Primary academy
MAT (if applicable):	United Learning

Estimate at this QA Review:	GOOD
Date of this Review:	25/02/2019
Estimate at last QA Review	NOT APPLICABLE
Date of last QA Review	NOT APPLICABLE
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	GOOD
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	30/06/2015



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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	GOOD
Outcomes for Pupils	GOOD
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	GOOD
Area of Excellence	NOT APPLICABLE
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	NOT APPLICABLE
Overall Estimate	GOOD

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

- Abbey Hey is a much larger than average primary academy located in an area of the highest deprivation quintile in the city of Manchester. Mobility is much higher than typically expected.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in the highest 20% of all schools nationally. The largest ethnic group is White British. There is a much larger than average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and this is increasing.
- The school has a stable leadership structure, made up of a principal, senior vice principal, four assistant principals and the Senco / Safeguarding Lead. Staffing is generally stable and there is one newly qualified teacher.
- Leaders work with other schools in the Trust to share the best practice at Abbey Hey. For example, delivering presentations on curriculum design, developing leaders and pedagogy.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- Not applicable.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Abbey Hey is an inclusive, outward-facing school that puts pupils at the heart of its work. Leaders use information from research to develop pedagogy, empower pupils and improve outcomes. For example, the focus on metacognition is improving the consistency of the quality of teaching across the school. The principal and senior vice principal are committed and reflective leaders who are inspired by the potential capacity for improvement. The ambitious culture galvanises staff and pupils so that deeper learning can become the norm over time. Despite the high deprivation, leaders see the community as part of the school's collective accountability to overcome all barriers through a no excuse culture. The sense of staff loyalty and commitment to Abbey Hey is palpable.
- Leaders have implemented a range of appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) programmes such as Kagan Cooperative Learning, the Rosenshine Principals for Instruction, Read, Write, Inc, writing, Maths - No Problem, Times Tables Rockstars and Pobble. Middle leaders cite the positive changes, in particular the consistent systems and structures that are improving the school. Typical comments were, 'senior leaders support and trust us' ...'everyone is listened to and no-one is right or wrong' ...'we all have a voice'.
- Two key aspects that have been significantly improved are parental engagement and pupils' behaviour for learning. The Happy Minds programme and morning meetings prepare pupils for learning. This has led to pupil-conscious discipline where pupils regulate their own behaviour, have higher quality engagement and more

engagement in their learning.

- Leaders track pupils' progress closely and so are articulate and confident when discussing pupils' achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND) make good progress with the support of a SEND toolkit, as demonstrated in their books. Year leaders meet with senior leaders frequently to make decisions to improve rates of progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make up over half of the school's population and have a range of complex needs. Therapeutic interventions within the nurture provision make a positive difference by plugging gaps in pupils' social and emotional development. Weekly clubs support pupils' learning at home. A variety of staff, including leaders, work with groups of disadvantaged pupils on 'keep up, catch up' activities and this is accelerating their progress.
- Extending vocabulary is a major focus during lessons, interventions, morning meetings and pre-teaching sessions. 'Hinge-point' questions provide information about pupils' understanding so that pupils can move on in their learning at the appropriate time.
- Accelerated Reader is supporting improving reading progress, along with other successful strategies. Leaders are working on deepening learning through questioning pupils on what prior learning they can remember and apply, as well as entry and exit quizzes. Best practice is identified through learning walks and is shared so that peers learn from each other.
- After school clubs and visits enhance the curriculum. After the Manchester bombing last year, leaders believed it was important to teach pupils to appreciate what is special about Manchester; and so, the whole school worked on the 'Manchester; A place to be' project. Visits from inspirational role models from the city, such as Anthony Crolla, university and police representatives help to raise pupils' aspirations of what they can achieve in the future.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

- ...the profile of the attainment needed for greater depth was raised in order to move more pupils towards achieving the higher standards.
- ...leaders took time to enable the key priorities that are meeting with success to embed consistently across the school.

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

- Not applicable.

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

- Pupils' views reflect the school's priorities. They enjoy lessons, especially art, science and mathematics where they are actively involved and can collaborate. They see mistakes as 'a good thing'. A group of disadvantaged boys were adamant that mistakes 'lead us to better learning and build our confidence'. Pupils feel it is important to have appropriate role models in school. Year 6 pupils spoke of their pride in wearing smart blazers, making them stand out from the rest of the school. They said that they want younger pupils to look up to them and think, 'I want to be like that'. Pupils are proud to be ambassadors for digital, attendance, sport, writing, reading and first aid.
- The positive climate for learning encourages high engagement and excellent behaviour. For example, a buzz of learning in a Year 3 history lesson was created by exciting discussion about the Stone and Bronze Ages. High expectations of behaviour and effort result in enthusiastic attitudes to learning.
- Pupils use prompts in the purposeful, vibrant learning environment and choose resources to support the flow of learning. Support staff guide targeted pupils to access tasks. In Years 5 and 6, Kagan strategies facilitated collaboration and helped pupils to self-evaluate their own learning, using actions such as 'numbered heads together'.
- Pupils' books demonstrate good progress over time, along with pride and neat presentation. Pupils enjoy talking about their learning and the challenges of the different reading domains. One pupil said, 'the best marking is when we are asked a challenging question'. The streamlined assessment policy is leading to more focused identification of gaps in learning and accelerating progress. Feedback from teachers is addressing misconceptions and challenging pupils to think more deeply. Writing books show stamina and standards that are in line with, and at times above, age related expectations. Maths - No Problem is consistently implemented and the use of diagnostic tests enables teachers to adapt the scheme to match the needs of pupils. Pupils explain their reasoning as they work which reinforces their competence. History and science books in upper Key Stage 2 show impressive depth of answers that are preparing pupils well for secondary school.
- When teachers model tasks, pupils make effective progress because they have a secure understanding of the expectations. The use of prior learning builds a sequence that helps pupils to make links between subjects. Year 1 pupils could articulate their thoughts due to the teacher's modelling of estimating and measuring.
- The Reception lead is proud of the impact of the training she has carried out with staff on how timely interventions and skilful questioning move learning on. Routines are embedded and allow children to move independently between areas. The outdoor environment provides open-ended, investigative activities such as den-building and planting. Learning journeys show positive impact of the specialist speech staff and step-by-step

assessments that chart children's development across the curriculum.

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

...a culture of challenge was consistently embedded through:

- differentiated planning that deepens pupils' learning.
- higher level questioning that stretches pupils' thinking at the point of learning.
- responsive teaching that moves pupils' learning on at the appropriate time.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- By the time they leave the school in Year 6, the majority of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make progress at least in line with national expectations from their low starting points.
- EYFS staff assess children's skills on entry, including visiting prior settings and homes; they use this information to plan provision. Most baselines, which are moderated within the Trust, are well below what is typically expected, particularly in communication and language. Language development of disadvantaged children is particularly behind. A speech and language specialist provides support to address the low literacy skills. Children make good progress from very low starting points. Hence the proportion of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) in 2018 was above the national average, an increase on the previous year. The proportion of children exceeding the expected standard has also significantly increased since the previous year, due to an excellent start in the Nursery, effective teaching and workshops for parents. Disadvantaged children performed better than non-disadvantaged children in 2018, an increase from the previous year and children with SEND made good progress.
- The Year 1 phonics results in 2018 were broadly in line with the national average and an improvement on the previous year. This impressive progress happens because all staff teach to a high standard and the impact of interventions is monitored.
- At Key Stage 1 in 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level and greater depth was just below the national average for all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils performed below other pupils nationally at expected and greater depth, although they made very good progress from low starting points.
- In 2018, Key Stage 2 attainment was below the national average in all subjects. This was unexpected in mathematics. Progress, however, was just above average. Attainment in writing has increased due to effective strategies and policies that leaders have developed and consistently high expectations of the standards of writing. The use of Pobble helps pupils to moderate their own standards. Cross-phase moderation checks assessment accuracy within school and within the trust.

- Progress for last year's Year 6 cohort was average in all subjects. The three-year trend shows that reading has increased, and writing significantly so, although mathematics progress dipped last year. Combined scores were below the national average for attainment and progress and have plateaued for the last two years. Greater depth levels increased but were still below the national average for combined.
- This year's Year 6 cohort scored lowly at the end of Key Stage 1. The school has added value to their progress since 2016. Currently, 70% of these pupils are on track to reach age related expectations (ARE) in mathematics, 70% in reading, 84% in writing, and 64% for combined, a significant increase from 2018.
- Current progress of disadvantaged pupils is strong. There is no significant difference in progress between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils for combined subjects in most year groups; in some cases, disadvantaged pupils are doing better. This was evident in lessons and pupils' books.

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

The school would be interested in strong examples of narrowing the gender gap for boys and improving achievement towards greater depth.

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.