



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR Five Acre Wood

Name of School:	Five Acre Wood School
Principal:	Peggy Murphy
Hub:	London Special and AP
School phase:	Special

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	LEADING
Date of this Review:	30/10/2019
Overall Estimate at last QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of last QA Review:	23/11/2018
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	OUTSTANDING
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	11/04/2019

Quality Assurance Review

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

Leadership at all Levels Leading

Quality of Provision and Outcomes Leading

And

Sharing practice with others

Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence Social Communication, Emotional regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS) across the curriculum
23/11/2018.
Distributed leadership 01/12/2017

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate Leading

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed peer evaluation estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

1. Context and character of the school

Five Acre Wood (FAW) shares a campus with a secondary and primary school, a private nursery, a local church and a gym. The majority of sixth form classes (Functional Learning Approach) and Formal Learning Approach Secondary classes are based at the Snodland satellite. There is a satellite provision at another primary school. There are 555 pupils, spanning an age range of two to 19 years. The school's provision continues to grow.

Pupils represent a wide range of additional educational needs within the areas of profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, complex needs, challenging behaviour, sensory impairments and autistic spectrum.

The school is currently organised in six Learning Approaches – Early Years, Practical, Sensory, Formal, Structured and Functional. All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHCP), except those in the nursery (observation and assessment).

The staffing complement is over 300. The school is supported by a NHS school nursing team and NHS physiotherapists. It has its own therapy team (Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists) and family liaison team. This year there are ten newly qualified teachers, two higher level teaching assistants who are teaching and two initial teacher trainees. There are 50 classes.

The school has been awarded Teaching School Status – Leading Education and Achievement For all (LEAF). The school employs the local specialist teaching and learning service (STLS). FAW has achieved a well-being award, which celebrates its work with the whole school community.

2.1 Leadership at all Levels - What went well

- The review began with school leaders showing a video of last year's whole school festival. This captures the ethos and commitment of all involved with FAW. Pupils are at the centre of all aspects of provision.
- In order to ensure that pupils receive a curriculum which is aligned to their learning needs, there are six learning approaches. This structure was formalised from the start of this academic year. Each learning approach has its own curriculum, self-evaluation form and development plan. This methodology is empowering more leaders in a strategic way. Furthermore, it adds to the capacity of the current leadership team.

- The progression model at FAW is about achieving continual growth through encouraging, and indeed expecting, leaders at all levels to consider how their areas of responsibility can be improved further. Staff and middle leaders discuss and implement ideas with senior colleagues. This dialogue enables senior leaders to steer progression strategically.
- Owing to the principal's strategic thinking and empowerment of colleagues, leaders trail blaze thinking in SEND provision. One illustration of this is how leaders have addressed the need to improve local arrangements for EHCP work. The system developed means that written plans and review information are all in one place.
- The structured approach to the six-part curriculum model has evolved over time. It is pupil-need led. This means that each curriculum is aligned and tailored to pupils in each of the learning approaches. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for example, Reception and Year 1 have been combined to support the pupils in embedding key learning skills. In the functional approach, life skills and independence are central, given the ever-changing world (preparation for adulthood).
- The school is engaged with a range of networks. This enables leaders to carry out a range of different activities. In the Kent Special educational Needs Trust (KSENT), a standardised assessment tracking approach has been agreed. This has helped leaders clarify what expected progress looks like. The school uses this as a basis for assessment work. It has also ensured that teachers in each learning approach have a toolkit of other assessment strategies (such as SCERTS), to suit pupils. Information gleaned from such work ensures that pupils receive appropriately challenging learning adventures.
- Leaders understand the importance of pupils in each approach accessing the curriculum as best they can. If conventional teaching of reading is not going to work, leaders trust teachers to clarify what will. Consequently, a wide range of resources, such as phonics and computing, are evident. Leaders possess excellent knowledge of early reading development.
- A well-being award has been achieved. This celebrates the positive culture evident at the school. Staff work hard, knowing that they belong and understanding how they contribute to the FAW way. Induction of new staff makes expectations clear. Staff relationship guidelines support staff in their personal and professional development.
- There is insufficient space in this report to capture the full range of provision that makes FAW such a special place to learn, work and play.

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

...as the school continues to grow, leaders at all levels ensured that the current culture continues to thrive.

3.1 Quality of Provision and Outcomes - What went well

- Pupils thrive due to their trusting relationships with staff. In their day to day work, staff treat pupils with dignity and respect. Pupils are included in conversations and are expected to contribute in various ways.
- Pupils in the post-16 provision articulate their ambitions clearly. They recognise the support and guidance afforded to them by staff. When asked what they valued most about their time at FAW pupils said, 'the people' and 'the staff'.
- Staff take the time to ensure they know each pupil and their barriers to learning. They use this knowledge to select and deliver activities which motivate pupils to learn. At the time of the review, pupils were provided with activities which related to the theme of Hallowe'en.
- Pupils engage well in their learning. This is because the curriculum offer is purposeful. In the EYFS, children are encouraged to play imaginatively. Staff observe children's interests and then set up activities which help children pursue these interests. During the review, colleagues commented on 'awe inspiring' moments across all learning approaches.
- Staff are skilled at pre-empting what pupils might do. Effective use of communication aids, coupled with visuals such as signing, enable pupils to communicate their feelings to staff. Staff are skilled at implementing zones of regulation in their classrooms. When pupils identify their feelings, staff respond appropriately. More importantly, these techniques enable pupils to access their learning more easily.
- In the most effective lessons, learning is planned carefully. The individual lesson builds on what has been taught previously. This supports pupils well in remembering more and being able to do more.
- Classroom staff have time to plan together. During this time, staff draw on their knowledge of the pupils and on their subject knowledge. As a result, all adults know what to do to support learning. Teaching is therefore seamless, with each pupil receiving the intervention they need to make strong progress.
- Pupils are cordial. They look out for each other, showing empathy in a variety of ways. During lunch in the post-16 provision, pupils worked together in delivering and clearing away food. In a science lesson, pupils made sure that they did not step on paper planes that were being flight tested by classmates.
- Teachers orchestrate their classrooms effectively. Whilst this is a common feature seen in lesson visits, it looks very different in each learning approach. This is what leaders want to see. Both leadership and teaching are courageous with a flourishing mutual trust.
- During lesson visits, the most effective learning occurred in small group activities. Here, activities were tailored to the specific needs of a few pupils or individuals.
- Staff and pupils are happy at FAW. This is a result of collegiality and commitment. The whole school ethos is upbeat and positive.

3.2 Quality of Provision and Outcomes - Even better if...

...where learning is less effective, teachers thought critically about pupils' learning preferences and facilitated effective learning by moving away from a 'one size fits all' model.

4.1 Sharing practice with others (school choice of focus)

What went well

- A wide variety of provision, centred at FAW, illustrates the successful sharing of effective practice with others. SCERTS, for example, permeates through many strands of the FAW way and is used to inform assessment, teaching assistant (TA) and parental engagement. The leadership team has thought very carefully about the language used in the development of research to maximise the engagement of staff. So, in its promotion, instead of referring to SCERTS, the phrase used is 'the power of you'. This highlights the impact the TAs have on the pupils and also on the culture of the school.
- Senior leaders are actively involved with KSENT. The principal was involved in its formation and sits on the executive committee. She also has responsibility for one of four portfolios, namely school to school support. Other senior leaders and staff are dedicated to the work of KSENT which supports external moderation and training at all levels - from initial teacher training to national professional qualifications.
- The LEAF Teaching School goes from strength to strength. Its work reaches out to local primary schools, for example in reviewing SEND provision. It also facilitates school to school support, with a focus on SENCo support. The LEAF offer includes staff training, with TAs from mainstream settings visiting FAW to observe practice. This helps develop mainstream practice.
- The STLS is a commissioned service by Kent LA, providing outreach work in mainstream schools. It supports families who have children aged under five. This support helps families understand and work through early SEND processes – including diagnosis and learning about systems.

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

Nothing required at present.

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.