



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR PADDOCK WOOD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Name of School:	Paddock Wood Primary Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Libby Fidock
Hub:	Leigh Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Leigh Academies Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	28/09/2022
Overall 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:	12/07/2016



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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:

Leadership at all levels Effective

Quality of provision and outcomes Effective

AND

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

Area of excellence Not applicable

**Previously accredited valid areas
of excellence** Not applicable

Overall peer evaluation estimate Effective

***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

Paddock Wood Primary Academy is larger than primary schools typically found nationally, with three-form entry in all year groups. The school serves the small town of Paddock Wood in West Kent, which has a mixed demographic with some highly aspirational families and others with considerable financial or social challenges.

The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, although the school has pupils from 15 out of the 17 possible ethnic groups. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average, whilst the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) has increased notably in recent years.

The school has been a member of the Leigh Academies Trust since 2019 and has recently been accredited as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. The experienced principal has been in post for just over one year, having previously led another trust academy. Following a significant bereavement last year, the school community has experienced some very challenging times, and although managed well by leaders and the trust, this precipitated considerable staff changes.

This is the school's first Challenge Partners review.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The inspirational headteacher is taking an enthusiastic and pragmatic approach to securing the best possible provision for all pupils. She is ably supported by the knowledgeable and committed senior and extended leadership teams. Senior leaders speak with credibility about embodying the school's ambitious and inclusive vision with its commitment to building thinking learners and creating lasting memories.
- Leaders speak very positively about the high levels of support provided by the trust, with many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues helping to develop their practice and expertise. This collegiality is complemented by specialist advisers, shared professional development and a systematic monitoring and review structure, all of which help to continually drive improvements.
- Leaders at all levels are actively involved in detailed school improvement planning. This provides clarity on the key priorities identified and reflects the rapid improvements that have been made in recent times. Notably, these next steps are displayed prominently around the school, so all staff know them and are clearly working towards common goals.
- Warm and productive relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils, are an important feature of school life. Pupils are encouraged to show

agency in their work and have excellent attitudes to all aspects of school life, which leads to a very positive climate for learning.

- The learning environment is engaging and well-resourced, with a consistent approach evident in all classes and impressive displays celebrating learning across the curriculum. The outdoor areas are spacious and well-maintained, having been enhanced recently with an extended Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) dedicated space.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including many visits and visitors, which enrich school life. The school's minibuses are used extensively to enable classes to undertake frequent trips. For instance, Year 6 pupils currently attend a local high school to experience their specialist science resources. There are also many well-attended lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include pottery, chess, church fun club, rugby, football, athletics, karate and French.
- The school plays an important role in the local community, with many links made with local business and organisations. For instance, pupils assist at the town's foodbank and a local construction company recently worked with Year 6 for an architecture project. Such initiatives help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain, as do the leadership responsibilities they are encouraged to undertake.
- Parents, families and the wider community play an important part in school life and are very supportive of the school. Parents also engage well with the 'Proud at Paddock Wood' weekly feature on the newsletter, where individual pupils' achievements from both in and out of school are celebrated. In addition, the active parent teacher association hosts many popular fundraising events, such as firework displays and doughnut sales.

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

...foundation subject leaders had further opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.

...some subject leaders, especially those newly appointed, became more confident in using assessment and taking effective action.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Leaders and teachers have developed a bespoke primary years' programme using the IB concept-driven approach which links well with the National Curriculum. The curriculum is embedded within six transdisciplinary themes, such as 'how the world works', 'how we express ourselves' and 'where we are in place and time'. These are then placed in the context of the school with teaching teams having autonomy with how and when the themes are taught. The themes are tracked carefully to ensure full coverage, with particular emphasis on inquiry to help develop pupils' critical thinking skills by enabling them to make their own links between subjects. For instance, in a Year 4 inquiry lesson, pupils were

confidently making posters about keeping their teeth healthy, following an experiment to test the effect of different drinks on a hard-boiled egg.

- The curriculum is enhanced by the ten learner profile attributes, which include being principled, open-minded or a risk taker. These are used in lessons and pastorally to embody the school's ethos whilst developing well-rounded learners.
- The staff team benefit from an extensive range of continual professional development (CPD) opportunities which are targeted to extend individual's knowledge and pedagogical expertise. Professional development is led by a combination of internal, trust-wide and external experts, and complemented by regular staff meetings and peer triads undertaking learning walks and lesson studies. Consequently, the subject knowledge of teachers and support staff is strong and helps to secure an ongoing culture of learning for all.
- The learning walls in every classroom are an important feature of lessons. These focus on the key skills and are used effectively by teacher and support staff, with pupils drawing on the information independently to consolidate or extend their understanding.
- The IB curriculum framework commences from EYFS onwards. The high expectations and real-life experiences evident in the provision help to make the youngest children curious, independent and ready to learn. This ethos continues throughout pupils' time at the school.
- Outcomes in early reading and phonics are above national averages, due to the consistent delivery of the systematic programme. The emphasis on reading continues into older year groups, with a range of high-quality texts linked with the transdisciplinary themes or the inquiry focus. This approach was evidenced in Year 5 when pupils demonstrated their understanding of a challenging novel about refugees which related to the inquiry of citizenship in the community.
- Pupils show high levels of writing aptitude which are reflected in the positive outcomes achieved in all year groups. Teachers focus skilfully on the craft of writing, with pupils using impressive vocabulary from an early age and editing their work independently. Writing tasks often include appropriate application across the curriculum, and further enhanced by each child having their own laptop or other device.
- The school benefits from subject specialist teaching, particularly for modern foreign languages and physical education. For instance, in a very successful Year 4 French lesson, pupils enjoyed exploring a French dictionary following phonics input in the language, using actions and sound effects to further develop their skills.
- Leaders and teachers work hard to ensure that pupils are ready for the next stages of their education. Gaps in learning following the pandemic are being addressed effectively, with outcomes at the end of each key stage being above national averages, at both the expected and higher levels.

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

...there was greater consistency in teaching and learning to build on the best practice found.

...pupils were able to further articulate and celebrate their love of reading.

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

- The SEND co-ordinator (SENDCo) shows confidence and passion in her role and has developed positive relationships with parents and external agencies. The SENDCo maintains close tracking information for all vulnerable pupils and works closely with teaching staff to identify barriers to learning and how to address these. She is supported by the principal, who holds the SENDCo qualification, and the inclusion team, who lead many interventions and train support staff. In addition, the trust has a curriculum adviser for SEND who provides networking opportunities and rigorous CPD for the SENDCo.
- The principal is the leader with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils which reflects the importance the school places on this vulnerable group. She liaises frequently with teaching staff who track the progress of these pupils carefully. Consequently, both the pastoral and academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are generally very positive.
- The curriculum is adapted to best meet the needs of pupils with additional needs or other vulnerabilities. The high expectations of all are exemplified by teachers' planning starting with consideration of any SEND needs. Adaptations are further helped by the ready use of laptops for every pupil, so additional needs can be discretely supported with different overlays and resources.
- The close tracking used indicates that academic and pastoral outcomes over time, for both SEND and disadvantaged pupils, are generally very strong. Most of these pupils make strong progress from their individual starting points.
- Support staff are deployed well and work very effectively in and across classes. They support individual pupils and groups proactively.
- Vulnerable pupils particularly benefit from the caring, nurturing ethos. This is exemplified by Lola, the dog mentor, who is loved by all and often used to calm a child or to support their reading or other learning.
- The attendance of all groups of pupils, including those disadvantaged and with additional needs, is higher than national averages. Rates of persistent absenteeism have shown improvement and are now lower than typically found nationally.

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

...pupils with SEND were enabled to access the strategies and resources provided with greater independence.

5. Area of Excellence

Not submitted for this review.

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/>)

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>)