



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
WATERGATE SCHOOL

Name of School:	Watergate School
Headteacher:	Aine Ni Ruairc
Hub:	South East London
School type:	Foundation Special
MAT:	Not applicable

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	03/05/2019
Estimate at last QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of last QA Review:	31/01/2018
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	OUTSTANDING
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	07/03/2017

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	OUTSTANDING
Outcomes for Pupils	OUTSTANDING
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	OUTSTANDING
Area of Excellence	Not offered at this review
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	The Mobility Opportunities Via Education (MOVE) programme, 31/01/2018
Overall Estimate	OUTSTANDING

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

- Watergate is a special primary school. There are 116 pupils on roll, between the ages of four and 11.
- All pupils have special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) and have education, health and care plans (EHCPs) or are in the process of being assessed.
- All pupils have severe learning difficulties (SLD). Half of the pupils have an additional diagnosis of an autistic spectrum condition and approximately a fifth of the pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Pupils' attainment on entry is significantly lower than that expected for their chronological age. Recently, the complexity of need on entry has increased.
- Almost all of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The largest groups being Black African or Black Caribbean. Almost half of the families speak English as an additional language, although most pupils use little or no spoken language.
- Approximately three quarters of the pupils are boys.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above the national average.
- Pupils are grouped in 12 classes according to their special educational need and their age.
- There is a small and decreasing number of relatively higher functioning pupils who have dual placements or are supported to spend learning time in mainstream primary schools.
- The headteacher, who has been in post for six years, is retiring at the end of the academic year. There has been significant long term sickness in the senior team. The school is expanding and is building new purpose built facilities. The school is coping well with these challenging circumstances.
- Watergate is in a 'soft federation' with Greenvale, the secondary school which most of the pupils attend after Watergate. The school is in a co-operative trust with Brent Knoll School. The main purpose of the co-operative trust is to develop increased out of school activities for pupils and young adults with learning difficulties.
- At Watergate school, staff prioritise well-being, learning and achievement. They make a positive difference to pupils' lives.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- Leaders have successfully acted on the EBIs from the previous quality assurance review. They have conducted a skills audit for each teacher and reflected on the subsequent analysis which has informed professional development. The process was based on self-audit, based on Teachers' Standards, verified by senior leaders. Areas for development were identified and support put in place to

improve skills and understanding using resources from within and outside the school.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The headteacher and her leadership team have developed a culture of learning for all. This has resulted in a long-standing track record of excellent outcomes for pupils and a staff team who are committed to providing the best education for Watergate pupils.
- Senior and middle leaders are realistic about the effectiveness of the school. Senior leaders use their detailed knowledge about pupils, their families and issues which affect pupils' progress, to continually improve provision and outcomes.
- The school more fully utilises assessments by health professionals to improve target setting than in previous years. Due to the analysis of the progress of pupils with sensory impairments, specialist hearing and visual impairment specialists work more closely with school staff. This results in more integrated assessment, the provision of high quality specific training and the production of visual and hearing impairment support passports.
- Self-evaluation is inclusive and accurate. It leads to concise and effective school improvement planning with clear impact on pupils' outcomes.
- The school shares best practise with mainstream colleagues as well as those in special education settings. They share their learning across the school in formal and informal ways, such as the weekly whole school briefing. The school continues to share their practice, with post graduate certificate in education (PGCE) students from Greenwich University and via a variety of links with special and mainstream colleagues. A Specialist Leader of Education in school shares practice with the Lewisham Teaching Schools Alliance. Watergate is part of several moderation groups and they have supported Brent Knoll School in embedding the picture exchange communication system (PECS).
- Due to the commitment of developing leaders at all levels, especially middle leaders, the school has coped well with long term illness and retirements in the senior leadership team. New leaders are supported and developed using nationally recognised qualifications, training and carefully thought out internal support and development. Support staff undergo excellent continuous professional development (CPD). Higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) and senior nursery nurses, have an enhanced role in managing groups of pupils and leading learning.
- Watergate uses therapies and specialists to improve outcomes for pupils. Music therapy is particularly effective. Staff are offered training by therapists to increase their skills and understanding. Therapists and specialists plan with and share learning with all staff. The excellent MOVE programme is shared with class teams to ensure that physical development is worked on by all staff. Parents are fully involved in MOVE target setting. A range of therapists go in to pupils' homes to

ensure that the learning is relevant and transferred to all settings.

- Leaders continue to develop and refine the school's vision and curriculum, to ensure that it prepares pupils for life outside of school and for the next stage of their education. The school is developing a school cinema and a local allotment. MOVE, creativity and therapeutic approaches are strong features of the school approach.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

- ...leaders used their positive relationships with Greenvale secondary school, to ensure that the curriculum even more fully prepares pupils for life after Watergate
- ...pupils' outcomes were better captured and shared more widely to demonstrate pupils' holistic progress.

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

- 'All pupils had access to 'hands on' practical resources, to reduce waiting time and increase learning time'. Leaders have set up areas of the school where pupils have access to more practical activities. This includes providing a table of mathematical activities in the entrance hall to the school. In lessons, there is a greater emphasis than before on using practical resources
- 'Teachers considered if pupils would gain more by working on activities distinct from the main group'. The school has taken action to ensure that in lessons there are more examples of individual and challenging group work in order to increase challenge for pupils who need more challenge or more support.

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

- At Watergate, relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are strong and trusting. There are many examples of pupils supporting and co-operating well with each other. Well-rehearsed routines and clear expectations result in conduct and behaviour for learning being consistently strong.
- Staff have excellent knowledge of their subjects and pupils. They know when and how to challenge pupils and are able to step back or be flexible when required. Teachers build on previous learning effectively. Staff use praise, specifically and at the right level for each pupil. Learning objectives are clear and effectively shared with support staff and pupils.
- Engagement is high. There is a purposeful 'learning buzz' across the school. Pupils are active in their learning. In a lively and engaging music session, pupils benefited from the animation and skill of the teacher. This resulted in

independence and active learning being maximised. The teacher delivered instructions to teaching assistants (TAs) through song. Teaching staff effectively used musical cues to signify change in activity. Pupils with PMLD were observed to respond to this and showed anticipation of a change of activity.

- All staff, including meal supervisors, know the pupils well. At lunch time, pupils are encouraged to be more independent and to take responsibility for themselves.
- There is a culture of appropriate risk taking across the school. Pupils with significant physical difficulties, were challenged to independently explore and collect items in the sensory garden.
- Team work is effective. In parts of lessons, it is not apparent who the teacher is, while in other lessons the teacher skilfully deploys and directs staff to maximise learning opportunities.
- Communication is a strength of the school. In a PECS session, run by a HLTA, each pupil had numerous opportunities to communicate and to enjoy their learning. Every minute of the session was filled with learning.
- Lessons are well planned with appropriate differentiation and pace. This maximises learning as well as ensuring that pupils have enough time to process information and formulate responses.
- Pupils show that they enjoy learning. There are many examples of pupils showing persistence and resilience. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own learning by exploring, smelling, looking and listening. In an art lesson, a pupil was interested in putting masking tape on their hand. This was developed and shaped, so that the pupil painted effectively in their own way.
- Teaching staff thoughtfully position pupils with physical disabilities, in order for them to get the most out of the learning activity. Medication and health procedures are administered seamlessly.
- In a rebound/MOVE session, teaching staff used a holistic approach to learning. The outcome was much more than just physical development. The member of staff built communication and tangibly developed the pupils' self-esteem.
- Teaching staff use well targeted visual and multi-sensory resources, to enable pupils to better understand their environment, make choices and express themselves.

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

...the excellent communication strategies, used by pupils in structured sessions, were consistently used across the school day

...the best practice in problem solving and functional independence skills was shared across the school to ensure consistency in this area.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Until the end of 2018, Watergate defined expected progress as $\frac{1}{2}$ a P-level per year and $\frac{3}{4}$ of P-level as better than expected progress.

- The school is thoughtfully moving away from progression guidance measures, to develop an assessment system that is more fit for purpose. The new assessment system stems from the P-level descriptors. It provides more relevant measures of attainment and progress, and will be known as the Watergate Steps.
- Assessment is rigorous and accurate, building on information from previous settings, home and the EHCP if in place. The school is refining its assessment system, based on 'Routes for learning,' 'the Seven Aspects of Engagement' and a number of assessment tools. These include assessment of the MOVE curriculum and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PHSEE).
- In 2018, at the end of Key Stage 2, over one third of pupils made above expected progress in reading and writing. Over two thirds of pupils made above expected progress in mathematics. Almost all pupils made expected or above expected progress in the core subjects. The small cohort of relatively more able pupils achieved especially well in mathematics. Reading progress was strong.
- Disadvantaged pupils made slightly better progress than their non-disadvantaged peers in reading and mathematics. Similar progress was made in writing.
- In 2018 at the end of Key Stage 1, more than two thirds of pupils made more than expected progress in mathematics.
- Moderation of standards is robust. Watergate has excellent internal and external moderation processes. The school moderates with the Lewisham special school group and with a specialist learning partnership comprising 22 schools. Recently, leaders have enlisted the services of an assessment lead from Greenvale school, to further improve assessment procedures.
- Leaders are clear that the data for progress in PHSEE appears to be less strong on paper but not reflective of the actual abilities of pupils. Leaders are working with partner schools and the wider schools network to ensure that the PHSEE assessments more accurately show progress.
- Current progress in English and mathematics remains strong across the school with the proportions of expected and above expected progress generally increasing as pupils move through the school. The proportions of pupils with sensory impairments and or PMLD not making expected progress is disproportionately high in English, mathematics and PE. Current progress in science is especially strong.
- A small proportion of pupils do not make expected progress due to extremely complex medical needs. This results in low levels of attendance and or other health issues, such as high seizure activity.
- Pupils are well prepared for life after school. A key outcome of pupils' time at the school is increased self-confidence.

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

The school is already well connected to Challenge Partners and will seek additional support as it is required.



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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.