
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
School Address:	East End Road, Finchley, London N3 2TD
Hub:	The Compton School

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Unique Reference Number:	101335
Local Authority:	Barnet
Type of School:	Voluntary Aided
School Category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Number on roll:	238
Head teacher/Principal:	Linda O'Melia Interim, substantive from 1.4.17

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	30 June - 1 July 2015
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	20 - 22 March 2017
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES¹

School Improvement Strategies:	Outstanding
Outcomes for Pupils is:	Outstanding
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:	Outstanding
Area of Excellence:	Not submitted for this review
Previously accredited Areas of Excellence: Growth Mindset culture	

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that St Theresa’s Catholic Primary School appears to have moved beyond the Good grade as judged by Ofsted in the school’s previous Ofsted report and is working within the Outstanding grade.

1. 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.

Information about the school

- This is an average sized primary school. There is one class in each year group except for Year 4 where there are two.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, the largest of these are any other white, 34%. The proportion of pupils who are identified as having English as an additional language (EAL) is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is average and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average.
- The school has had a period of interim leadership at head and deputy level since September 2016. It has been supported by an executive head teacher. The current interim head teacher has been appointed the substantive head teacher from April 1 2017.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- School leaders have continued the developments in the learning culture since the last review, which confirmed Growth Mindset culture as an area of excellence. This has included training for teachers in proven styles of collaborative learning to extend pupils' experience beyond working closely with a partner, as well as trialling the recording of ideas on a range of surfaces. School leaders are continually building pupils' thinking, listening and discussion skills and looking for new ways of learning which will prepare them for the rapidly changing workplace.
- The school leader currently responsible for this area has regularly provided training for significant numbers of other school leaders on establishing learning culture based on a Growth Mindset. The school works with local schools and within the hub to provide training for the outstanding teacher programme. This is a significant contribution to the wide local network of schools. School leaders are also fully involved in the local Catholic Diocesan network and are contributing to the improvements in curriculum being made by them.
- The whole school leadership team works together highly effectively and is ambitious to continually improve the school. Leaders ensure that the whole staff are fully involved in any improvements and continually share excellent practice with other schools. They have made sure that the key priorities of improving pupils' achievement in writing, ensuring improvements in the proportion reaching a good level of development and, for those who don't, having a smooth transition to Year 1 and ensuring girls achieve as well as boys, continue this year. There are additional plans for developments during the summer term, including more opportunities for

teachers to engage in lesson study to continue to improve their highly effective practice.

- School leaders have correctly focussed current developments on improving writing. There has been a particular focus on cross-curricular writing and there is a comprehensive evidence base of examples, so that teachers are fully aware and pupils can clearly demonstrate the age and genre related writing skills in different subjects. This is particularly evident in science and religious education. The English leader has worked with all staff and with other schools to establish the progression of writing skills through different genre, for example, the different expectations of a newspaper report in Year 2 and Year 4. There have been increased opportunities for pupils to practise writing at length, linked to high quality text to provide excellent purpose and style. The science leader has ensured a high profile for science across the school including writing in science and working with local secondary schools in order to provide excellent scientific experiences for pupils. Involving parents who work in different scientific fields is raising pupils' aspirations and understanding of the purpose of science for further study and work.
- School leaders set a clear timetable for monitoring activities, including book scrutiny and learning walks so that the impact of current improvement objectives are checked.
- Senior leaders hold comprehensive pupil progress meetings each term. Class teachers are held to account, the progress of each individual pupil is fully evaluated and any programmes of additional teaching are checked and planned for. Assessment data is examined for each group of learners in each class to ensure that pupils are making accelerated progress from their starting points. School staff use highly effective assessment tools including summative tests and comprehensive descriptors for teacher assessment.

Even Better If...

... leaders and teachers tracked the progress of the pupils with different competencies within the wider group of EAL learners.

... school leaders continually developed the outstanding characteristics of so many aspects of the school, including the curriculum.

Pupil Outcomes

- Children start in the Reception class with skills that would be typically expected. There is significant variation in each cohort, both in the proportion of boys and girls, their ages, disadvantaged children and those learning English for the first time. For this reason, the proportion reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception fluctuates, but is above the national average.
- Teachers and all staff know pupils as individuals, they are highly valued and apply their 'learning muscles,' to a wide range of learning and become 'Have a go Mo'

rather than 'Fixed mind Fred'. They clearly articulated how they had used these characteristics of highly effective learning on a recent residential trip. This clear culture and its language have been in place for four years and have had a highly positive effect on pupils' maturity and progress.

- Pupils at all key stages for the last three years have achieved above national averages. In 2016, 76% achieved the expected standard in the combined subjects of reading writing and mathematics.
- In 2016 at Key Stage 1, the proportion achieving expected outcomes in reading writing and mathematics were 84%, 79% and 86% respectively. The proportion achieving at greater depth is particularly high in mathematics.
- Mathematics is a key strength of the school. At Key Stage 2 in 2016, 62% of pupils achieved at greater depth.
- Progress measures from KS1-2 are also above well above the national average; for mathematics, 5.6, 4.1 for reading and at the expected level for writing.
- The small number of pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities make above average progress in reading and mathematics but just below in writing.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress. Some arrive with no English and make rapid progress.
- Pupils' work in their books shows clear progress from starting points, clear expectations and high quality writing in English and in other curriculum subjects. It is clearly evident that pupils are achieving at high levels, learn well over time and are sufficiently challenged at all levels of ability.
- Pupils are highly able to choose the level of challenge, understanding how to select the appropriate extra practice that matches their needs.
- Pupils understand the value of team work and cooperation and how use it in other situations. Pupils know that teachers' marking and feedback really helps them and that they are sufficiently challenged in lessons. Pupils have learnt to give constructive feedback to their peers and they say that this is really helpful to them.
- Pupils read an excellent range of texts both at school and home. For example, current Year 6 pupils are reading books by Conan Doyle.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What Went Well

- Teachers questioning is highly effective. Open questions are used to prompt discussion, for example, to enable pupils to explain the benefits of Fairtrade. Techniques are effective in ensuring all pupils are ready to answer. Teachers' questions enable pupils to demonstrate higher order thinking and to explore pupils' understanding and reasoning behind their answers. Pupils clearly articulate orally and in written answers. Questioning provides challenges to pupils' thinking and they

are given sufficient time to answer. Teachers target questions skilfully to check the understanding of pupils of differing abilities.

- The most able pupils in mathematics are highly articulate about what they are learning. Mathematics lessons are well planned, so that each group can make accelerated progress from their starting points. Pupils relish challenge and know exactly how to use the 'mild, spicy, hot' activities in each lesson.
- There is a highly positive culture for learning, pupils are continually encouraged to take risks and get things wrong. Pupils fully understand that this enables them to learn and can explain the importance of trying. The range of challenges is used in each subject and pupils are able to freely choose the ones that are appropriate. Pupils can justify and explain why they choose the challenges and vary their choices according to task and subject. For example they sometimes choose a 'hot' task to consolidate their skills before moving to a 'spicy' one.
- The designated 'talk partner' system is used highly effectively and these partnerships are changed each week, so pupils learn to work with a range of peers.
- Home learning is integrated well in to all the curriculum subjects, results are displayed and celebrated at school and there is always an open-ended outcome so pupils' learning is not restricted.
- Teachers always plan a clear purpose for writing and support all groups to achieve well-honed skills at whatever level they are working at.
- The learnings environment and working walls are used highly effectively to share pupils' work and display the success criteria. This supports peer and self-assessment and enables pupils to edit their work, so that they can see the next steps and end point of the learning. Teachers use developmental marking well and pupils' responses are clear.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use accurate technical vocabulary consistently. There are high expectations of the way pupils articulate their own understanding using complete sentences and correct terminology.
- Staff provide high quality activities in the Reception class, both adult and child led. There are excellent opportunities for challenge and problem solving. For example, when building a rocket with large crates, children were persistent and so completed the tasks. A wide range of writing and mark making opportunities are provided.
- Planning is adapted to the interests of each cohort and can suit the needs of the particular groups within the class. Excellent resources for literacy are well linked with other subject areas. Teachers transmit their passion for a subject and plan a range of different stimuli to inspire topics and writing, using resources to widen opportunities and spark interest. This is likely to be the reason for the high achievement of boys at the school.

Even Better If...

... there was consistent use of resources, adults, apparatus and visual support for those who are beginning to grasp and reinforce their understanding of concepts.

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

Following discussion with the headteacher, the school would like to reflect further about what support they might like.

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.