



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
CHARLES DICKENS PRIMARY
SCHOOL

Name of School:	Charles Dickens
Head teacher:	Cassie Buchanan
Hub:	Impact Alliance
School type:	Primary

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	19/03/2019
Estimate at last QA Review:	This is the first review
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	OUTSTANDING
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	10/03/2008



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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 OUTSTANDING

Outcomes for Pupils OUTSTANDING

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment OUTSTANDING

Area of Excellence Not offered at this review

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

- Charles Dickens, is a larger than average primary school, with a nursery provision. It caters for pupils from the ages of two to 11. There is a strong demand for places at the school. The number of pupils is increasing. There are currently 477 pupils on roll.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is just above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) is increasing and is above the national average. The main categories of additional needs are; autistic spectrum conditions, social emotional and mental health, specific learning difficulties and speech and language and communication difficulties. Over half of the pupils with SEND are also deprived children or have challenging home circumstances.
- The deprivation index of the school is above the national average. Almost a third of the school population is disadvantaged. The school population is diverse. Over a third of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Charles Dickens has a long-established track record of delivering outstanding outcomes for pupils. This is underpinned by 'the three pillars', namely academic excellence, creativity and the arts, and social intelligence and mental health.
- This outward facing school, supports and improves outcomes with partners locally, across the United Kingdom and around the world. This includes delivering 'Challenge the gap' and developing staff workload initiatives with the Department for Education (DFE).
- There is a strong emphasis on well-being for both pupils and staff. The school has developed well-being and positive mental health initiatives with the DFE and the Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School.
- Charles Dickens is the lead school in the London South Teaching School Alliance.
- Charles Dickens is a UNICEF, Gold status, rights respecting school. Pupils experience a rich, well thought out school experience, to equip them well for life after school.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- School leaders have high expectations for pupils and staff, to be the best that they can be. The headteacher and her team have a clear vision for the school. They are realistic about the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The school benefits from leaders' outward facing work, sharing and bringing initiatives in to school. Any new initiatives are based on research and their impact is carefully monitored.
- Leaders at all levels monitor outcomes regularly and accurately. Due to extensive internal and external moderation, the school is confident in its judgments of attainment.

- The quality of teaching is regularly and effectively monitored. More skilled and experienced teachers are paired with less experienced colleagues. This is to improve teaching, using supportive approaches such as coaching. Continuous professional development is well planned and successfully raises teaching standards.
- Senior leaders continue to increase the capacity for improvement, by supporting and developing an effective wider leadership team. Leaders undertake a range of nationally recognised qualifications and awards in school leadership. Staff are encouraged to undertake research and obtain masters degrees and doctorates.
- Senior leaders have a clear commitment to inclusion for pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. This has resulted in improved outcomes and reduced exclusions over time. The school has developed a three-tier approach to emotional well-being. It is underpinned by universal teaching in well-being and layers of higher level, more specific interventions added, according to need. This has reduced the need for external mental health referrals.
- Specialist teachers deliver high quality teaching in music, the arts and French, resulting in high levels of pupil engagement. The school provides a wide range of after school clubs to complement their curriculum offer.
- Pupils are well prepared for secondary school. Feedback from leavers and their families, together with a desire to improve outcomes in the foundation subjects, has resulted in the teaching of topic work being replaced by discrete foundation subject teaching. Pupils who leave Charles Dickens are well equipped in mathematics and modern foreign languages. The headteacher engages with each pupil in Year 5, to encourage them to aspire to apply for the best secondary schools. A significant number of pupils obtain scholarships at prestigious independent schools.
- The school council members take their roles seriously. They have increased the lunchtime healthy food offer and have supported the improvement of playtimes, as learning mentors and buddies. Playtimes are now even more harmonious. The student council is currently making a film about Children's Rights. They say that "we talk about things that make the school better...that is called impact".
- Charles Dickens pupils continue to leave the school as well-rounded, articulate and responsible individuals.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...senior leaders took time to celebrate their impact

...leaders ensured that all teachers have opportunities to observe and learn from seeing their pupils, in the excellent afternoon specialist SEND provision.

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

- Due to strong, trusting relationships, teachers' excellent subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how their pupils learn best, pupils are consistently, purposefully engaged in and enthused about their learning.
- Behaviour for learning is consistently strong. Pupils and staff are committed and always motivated to learn.
- Pupils have the confidence to take risks. They are resilient learners. Misconceptions are seen as opportunities to improve their understanding.
- Teachers' planning builds on prior learning. In almost all lessons, the clear flow of learning does not stop. The pace of learning is excellent. As a result, learning time is maximised.
- Where appropriate, teachers use a staggered start to the lesson. This encourages independence for pupils who have mastered the relevant concept and consolidate the learning for the remaining pupils in the class.
- Environments around the school are well thought out, purposeful and are of high quality. Displays in communal areas show the rich creative side of the school. Classroom displays are regularly changed and are designed to be specific to the learning at that time in the classroom.
- In mathematics, pictorial representations are well used to show pupils a variety of methods to solve problems, which develops deeper learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' use of language. Lessons across the school are rich in well modelled vocabulary. The modelling of key concepts and of expected learning is strong. Teachers are not afraid to hold discussions on challenging themes.
- Assessment for learning is a strong feature of the school including the use of talk partners and self-marking. Some teachers use a 'no hands up' approach so that pupils develop increased independence in their learning.
- The standard of teaching in the creative arts, delivered mainly by specialist teachers, is strong and inspirational. French is extremely well taught by a native French speaker. In these lessons, pupils are exposed to high levels of spoken and written French.
- Learning is personalised. Pupils receive the right support at the right time. In music, 'talk time' was short and concise, in an exhilarating lesson.
- The inspirational singing assembly, including a Hakka and heritage songs, successfully built a sense of community. Staff and pupils experienced awe and wonder.
- Pupils who need help to regulate their behaviour are well supported. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour. They use positive, specific praise and feedback to encourage pupils to stay on track in their learning.
- Learning for pupils with SEND is personalised. The afternoon provision is highly effective in supporting and challenging pupils to succeed.
- Provision in the early years is exemplary. Children make excellent progress, due to accurate assessment and imaginative, well-planned teaching. Teaching is

conducted in well thought out and stimulating environments.

- Pupils are clear that they appreciate the new approach to mathematics. 'We do more maths and there are clearer next steps'. Pupils across the school are confident and articulate. They love to share their learning. They are excellent ambassadors for their school.

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

...pupils consistently presented their work well, as a result of the accurate modelling and high expectations of teachers.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Children typically enter the school with skills, abilities and knowledge below age-related expectations, especially in personal and social development, communication and physical development.
- In 2018 at the end of the early years foundation stage (EYFS), the proportion of children attaining a good level of development (GLD) was above the national average. Almost all of the girls attained a GLD, whereas the proportion of boys who attained a GLD was above the national average for boys. Attainment in writing was lower than in other areas. There are now more structured activities in EYFS, as boys, a large proportion of whom are disadvantaged, were generally opting out of reading and writing tasks.
- In 2018, in the Year 1 phonics screening check, the proportion of pupils attaining the required standard was above average. All of the girls achieved the required standard. This continued a three-year trend of attainment significantly above the national average.
- In 2018, at the end of Key Stage 1, in the core subjects, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected and greater depth standards was significantly above the national average. Reading and mathematics were exceptionally strong. Disadvantaged pupils performed well but not as strongly as their non-disadvantaged counterparts. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils attaining the expected standard in science was closer to the national average.
- In 2018, at the end of Key Stage 2, in the core subjects, the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected standard and at greater depth standard was well above the national average. Almost all of the pupils attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. This represents the third consecutive year of improved and exceptionally strong attainment in all of the core subjects.
- In 2018, progress was well above the national average in all of the key subjects. This continued a trend of extremely strong and improving progress. The attainment gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils closed again at the end of 2018 in the core subjects.

- In 2018, progress for pupils with SEND was stronger in reading and writing, when compared with mathematics. Currently, the school is implementing a new assessment system for the SEND pupils who are functioning in line with the old P-levels.
- Standards in the current academic year remain strong. The school has identified certain pupils and cohorts of concern. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 are making improved progress in writing.
- Current attainment measures are supported by robust moderation and objective testing. Evidence from work scrutiny supports strong progress and increasing stamina in writing books and mathematical fluency. Outcomes across the school are likely to be at least in line with the extremely strong 2018 outcomes.

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

The school would like greater involvement in the 'growing the top' programme.

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.