



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR ABBEY MEAD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Name of School:	Abbey Mead Primary Academy
Headteacher:	Gary Aldred
Hub:	East Midlands South
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Mead Educational Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	04/03/2020
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	N/A
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding (predecessor school)
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	15/02/2011



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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:

Leadership at all Levels	Leading
Quality of Provision and Outcomes	Effective

AND

Quality of Provision and Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs

Area of Excellence	None submitted
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	N/A
Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate	Effective

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

Abbey Mead Primary Academy is a three-form entry school with a nursery in a very disadvantaged part of Leicester. It serves a mainly Asian population. Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The headteacher took on the role in January 2019 after having previously worked in another trust school.

The school is one of seven primary schools and three secondary schools in the Mead Educational Trust. All the schools are in Leicester City. Most pupils from the school transfer to a secondary school in the trust. The trust has been supporting the school since September 2018 although the school officially joined the trust in September 2019.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average, but there are many other pupils who live in multiple occupancy, who are not eligible for the pupil premium grant. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties (SEND) is high.

The school's vision is encapsulated in its strapline 'Learning every minute of every day.' Its values include teamwork, independence, integrity, curiosity, courage, confidence, creativity, risk taking, empathy and resilience.

This is the school's first Challenge Partners QA Review.

2.1 Leadership at all Levels - What went well

- The strategic vision at all levels is very strong. All leaders are clear about the school's direction. Leadership is distributed well. The principal has galvanised leaders into a strong force that is rapidly improving the school.
- The programme for professional development has two clear strands that complement one another well. These are personalised professional development for individual members of staff and training for areas of whole-school focus.
- All members of the school community, including pupils, can articulate the school's vision and values. Pupils said, 'The character muscles help to build our confidence. We use them every day.' 'We can trust our teacher to communicate how we're feeling'.
- Monitoring builds on the strengths in the provision and uses coaching to develop staff further. The trust creates opportunities for staff to develop their leadership skills, with the chance to share best practice in trust schools.
- In the past year, the strong pedagogy has moved to a new level, promoting creative flair and really engaging pupils in their learning. For example, pupils have been finding out about how the Second World War affected Leicester, using

original sources and contemporary photographs.

- Training for middle leaders is very strong and empowers them to take ownership of their roles and make a difference to pupils' achievement in their areas. For example, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has made the outdoor area more stimulating for children so that they can build their skills through a variety of creative and tactile experiences.
- The climate for learning has been created through strong pastoral support, a highly skilled team of professionals working with pupils and their families to overcome barriers to learning, such as mental health issues.
- The school has done a lot to educate parents in the broader curriculum. Parents are encouraged to join their children on educational visits. Each topic concludes with a 'landing' event to which parents come. These are very well supported. For example, Year 1 studied weather in Leicester and the wider world. The event showcased the work pupils had done. Parents were able to make comments about what they thought of their children's work. The school also makes good use of its Twitter account to keep parents informed.
- The school celebrates cultural and religious events for all, involving families fully. It provides a choice of Indian vegetarian, English vegetarian and meat dinners to suit all tastes. Leaders have taken guidance from the trust and the community about the new relationships and sex education provision. British values are taught through the curriculum.
- The school has close links with local businesses, including the textiles factory next door, restaurants and a green car rental company. These introduce pupils to the world of work. There are also links with the local residential home where pupils visit weekly. Leaders also provide pupils with opportunities to venture outside the built-up urban environment of where they live. For example, as part of their studies on castles, Year 2 pupils visited Warwick Castle.

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

...leaders further improved the rigour of assessment in foundation subjects.

(**Assessment:** assessment for learning)

...subject leaders joined networks to broaden their expertise.

(**Leadership and ethos:** community, external partnerships)

3.1 Quality of Provision and Outcomes - What went well

- Pupils' learning behaviours are excellent. Pupils are eager to learn. There are high levels of engagement and pupils work very well collaboratively. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils in mixed ability pairs had a solid understanding of problem solving when dividing by 100.

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- The quality of teaching is consistent across classes within year groups. Teachers plan together and every pupil has similar access to the curriculum. In Year 1 phonics, teachers were using similar strategies. They were asking pupils to find the split -e in each class. They had differentiated activities for different groups of pupils. Additional adults and students were following the same routines and expectations.
- The use of questioning was similar in all classes in Year 6 English, with pupils developing vocabulary for their final piece of writing about the novel, *Skellig*. Teachers were asking pupils to recall their prior knowledge and identify key features, such as precise verbs and nouns.
- Teachers vary starting points to lessons for different groups of pupils. This makes the pitch and challenge in lessons secure. Teachers move pupils on in their learning when they are ready. In Year 3 English, pupils were learning about adjectives in the book, *Escape from Pompeii*. The most able pupils were writing extended noun phrases first before joining the teacher. An example was, 'The glowing, red river of lava'. One commented, 'We are doing noun phrases: you need more than one adjective, but not too many because it sounds silly!' The others went back to their tables to fill in a 'zone of relevance' activity with the most important noun phrases from the book.
- There is good progression across the school in terms of the development of skills. In reading, pupils have the same goal to comprehend the text. In Year 5 PE, the teacher was developing throwing and catching skills while moving in order to build up to playing a netball game.
- Books show the sequence of learning through a series of lessons, for example in mathematics and writing. A pupil said, 'This lesson we are dividing by 100; last lesson we divided by 10'. Pupils knew how the reading was influencing the writing, such as in Year 3 with the story, *Escape from Pompeii*.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong. They are confident and this enables them to structure the learning well. There was very good teacher modelling in phonics in Reception, and in Year 2, pupils were learning whether a half was equal or not equal.
- Teachers use the resources well, especially in mathematics, to develop pupils' understanding, such as around place value.
- In 2019, attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was high. Attainment in writing was broadly in line with the national average. Progress was average in reading and above average in mathematics but well below average in writing. The difference is partly explained by a 'bulge' class that joined the school in Year 5 with little English and lower standards in writing. These pupils made faster progress in reading and mathematics than they did in writing.

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

...working walls were consistently developed to model the learning journey, including key vocabulary and visual aids in English.

4.1 Quality of Provision and Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- Resources are well adapted for pupils with SEND, such as when a pupil was using a laptop for reading and spelling. In Year 6, the learning was more kinaesthetic and scaffolded carefully. In Reception phonics it was very multi-sensory, with children using the outdoor area.
- The ethos around SEND is very positive. All pupils are supported, no matter what they need, to succeed. The strong team approach means that no child is left behind.
- Teachers and support staff know the pupils with additional needs well and adapt the learning to suit their individual requirements. The work is pitched well, so that pupils are fully included in lessons.
- The use of additional adults is strong. They are well trained and play an active role in supporting pupils from their different starting points. Additional adults are confident in using their own initiative so that no learning time is wasted.
- Parental perceptions of SEND have changed. There is a much greater acceptance of additional needs. The school's determination to communicate with and educate families comes through.
- The school provides enrichment opportunities for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. The school offers equity of provision, resulting in high take up of activities such as coding and eco-warriors.
- The behaviour and attitudes of disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs are very positive. Where pupils have specific difficulties, these are managed well.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs make strong progress. In reading in 2019, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was greater than it was for other pupils.
- There have been no exclusions over the past two years. There is early identification and the school fights for local authority funding for the pupils.

4.2 Quality of Provision and Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

...teachers considered including pupils with additional needs as much as possible in memorable class activities, especially when the experience of joining in with the others would benefit them.

5. Area of Excellence

None submitted.



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

Leaders attended the Challenge Partners National Conference. They were interested in the inclusivity approach. Leaders would like to look at areas of excellence in other schools. The hub is run by the head of the teaching school that is part of the trust.

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.