QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR OAKLEY SCHOOL

Name of School:	Oakley School
Headteacher/Principal:	Sam Perryman
Hub:	London AP Special
School phase:	All through Special
MAT (if applicable):	Not applicable

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	13/06/2022
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading
Date of last QA Review	28/10/2019
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	03/04/2019

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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	Leading
Quality of provision and outcomes	Leading
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	Leading

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.

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1. Context and character of the school

Oakley is a special school for pupils with severe and complex needs with 210 on roll. It is situated on three sites. It has a satellite provision with two places per year group in a mainstream primary school. Phase Four for 15-19 olds is in Tonbridge. The nursery with assessment places, Phase One Two and Three are on the main site. All pupils, except some in the nursery, have education, health and care plans (EHCP). Over a third are disadvantaged pupils. The school is one of 26 special schools in Kent which work closely together in the Kent Special Educational Needs Trust (KSENT).

The headteacher became the substantive head in September 2020. There is a deputy headteacher, school business manager and three assistant headteachers in the senior leadership team (SLT) and phase leaders make up the extended leadership (ELT) team. The school has devised a creative curriculum organised into four pathways, all of which are taught in each phase. The curriculum provides relevant, interesting activities that lead towards independence from the very beginning. These pathways are for pupils with differing cognitive strengths and needs. The school has trained and uses 'Thrive' (social and emotional assessment and programmes) and forest school practitioners. The school has mature woodland within its grounds. It is the only special school with the SMSC gold award.

2.1 Leadership at all levels – What went well

- Leaders are ambitious to continually improve. They evaluate the school accurately and have fully implemented the EBI from the previous reviews. Leadership is distributed widely and they manage change carefully, ensuring that the whole staff team understands their role and initiatives are securely embedded.
- Leaders collaborate and strongly contribute to the KSENT training for colleagues in other schools. They lecture and provide support for local initial teaching training providers. They also provide outreach support for mainstream schools. These activities enable them to have significant impact on the wider educational system.
- Leaders highly value the varied skills of all staff. They provide training routes for teaching assistants to undertake specific responsibilities. For example, the 'Thrive, forest school practitioner and a Makaton trainer. These members of staff work across the school supporting all their colleagues to integrate social and emotional development and communication in class lessons.
- Leaders have introduced an online system for recording evidence and tracking progress, 'Evidence for Learning'. This is beginning to have impact in collating video evidence and for all staff to contribute to assessment of pupils' progress.
- Staff collaborate highly effectively. They are involved in research groups to work on developments in curriculum and assessment. For example, the assessment frameworks are well thought out and collate descriptors from a range of

recognised formats to provide a holistic record of pupils' achievements.

- Phase leaders work with all teachers in the phase to assess pupils' progress each term. This ensures assessment is moderated internally and enables the phase leaders to support colleagues to develop teaching.
- All staff have had training for 'Thrive'. The practitioner supports all colleagues in providing suitable activities for their classes as a result of assessment of the pupils. The assessment of pupils' emotional maturity really helped staff to understand how they need to talk to, and provide for, pupils to enable them to feel emotionally secure. Analysis of the school data shows the impact of this approach has been to significantly reduce numbers of incidents of behaviours of concern, particularly for some individual pupils.
- Leaders are continually developing the curriculum and extending it. They have recently appointed a forest school practitioner and specialist music teacher. Pupils highly value their music lessons and know they are preparing items to sell at the summer fair when working in the forest school area. Pupils participate widely in their local community, for example building soap box cars to compete in a race with mainstream schools.
- The proactive and highly experienced governors work closely with the senior team to maintain strategic oversight and keep the 'children at the heart of all we do'. They provide challenge and support especially in negotiations with the local authority for developing provision for SEND in the locality.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if…

… leaders provided more opportunities for new teachers to work with colleagues.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Staff know pupils exceptionally well. There is excellent mutual respect in all relationships in the school. Pupils eagerly explain how they have been involved in appointing teachers. Others communicate their sensory needs by their vocalisations and reactions. Staff respond to these promptly and provide appropriate, individualised, self-regulatory activities.
- Teachers design activities based on curriculum topics that maximise skills for life as well. The whole school works on the same topic theme and these are chosen to be topical and of interest. Pupils' individual targets are set for their EHCP and curriculum subjects and experiences are sequenced carefully to build pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Older pupils on pathway one, learnt to clean their teeth. Their attention was gained skilfully by the teacher with a well-established routine based on 'Attention Autism' principles. Pupils followed a well-structured set of activities, maintaining focus, so that they brushed teeth effectively.

- Pupils are aware of their progress as they learn new things in carefully planned activities that develop a range of knowledge and skills. Older pupils at the main site are looking forward to transferring to the Tonbridge site and going on to particular colleges. A pupil explained that he had a target to try new foods, as he ate the raisins he weighed in grams to make rock buns.
- Specialist staff for physical education (PE), music and forest school work with class and therapy teams to ensure that activities also support pupils progress towards their targets. There are strong links between PE staff and occupational therapists to understand pupils' physical development and what is appropriate practice for them.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if…

… teachers continued to develop the curriculum to ensure preparation for adulthood starts at the earliest opportunity.

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

- In this special school all pupils have additional needs and many are disadvantaged. School leaders asked the review to focus on the provision for total communication and pupils' well-being.
- Staff fully integrate total communication into all aspects of teaching. They provide symbols and visual timetables, communication boards, picture exchange communication systems (PECS) and other devices to enable pupils to communicate effectively. Pupils contributed answers with voice output communication aids (VOCA)' systems that clearly demonstrated their understanding.
- Pupils in a pathway one class independently collected the equipment they needed to follow a recipe because of the excellent booklet they had which was fully symbolised.
- Pupils commended one of their friends for being excellent at Makaton signs. Staff and pupils use them to facilitate understanding and the youngest children are responding. For example, expressing delight and anticipation when they play with water after recognising the sign.
- Pupils learn to self-regulate well. They independently determine when they need a break. One pupil negotiated with the teacher when she went through the visual timetable for the lesson, identifying that he would need a 'calming' break earlier, and moved the symbol. Some pupils have individual programmes of support when the assessment identifies particular emotional needs. These are successful in helping pupils understand their feelings, interoceptive reactions to them and

exercising cognitive control.

- Staff have implemented a 'thrive' session after lunchtime each day. These are tailored for the emotional needs of each class and have been highly successful in reducing behaviours of concern. Pupils articulated very positive comments about their friends in a circle time activity. They made eye contact and pupils expressed that these comments made them feel happy and pleased. They focussed their breathing well to calm and recognise this feeling in themselves.
- Pathway three pupils understood gratitude and how to express it because the teacher introduced key vocabulary carefully. Pupils fully understood so that they could give personal examples and express their thoughts. Well-constructed examples of social situations enabled pupils to problem solve, understand the context and how this would have an impact on their emotions. Pupils contributed examples form their own experiences.

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

… leaders continued to create opportunities in the timetable to meet individual learners' needs.

5. Area of Excellence

Not submitted for this review.

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

School leaders are involved in the hub and value the support from this. They don't need any further support at this time.

Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, the main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities and CP will collate and

analyse report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.

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 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.