QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
Oakley School

Name of School:	Oakley School
Executive Head:	Gordon Tillman
Hub:	London South East Special Schools
School type:	Community Special
MAT (if applicable):	Not applicable.

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	21-23 January 2019
Estimate at last QA Review	This is the school's first review.
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	11-12 March 2015

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	No submission made.
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	This is the school's first 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

- Oakley is a day special school for young people aged 2 to 18. These pupils have profound, severe and/or complex needs.
- The school is based on three sites. One of these has phase-based classes for pupils age 5 to 16 and a fairly new nursery. A second is for a small group of children within a satellite class based in a primary school. A third site is for students aged 16 to 18. A specialist college for young adults aged 18 to 25 has just been opened on this same site but was not included in this review. A total of 199 young people are placed at the school, all of whom have education, health and care (EHCP) plans.
- The senior leadership structure was adjusted in September 2018 to take account of the wider range of provision now made.
- The young people at the school come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Over half of them are from White British backgrounds.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for almost a third of its pupils, which is higher than the national average.
- Since the headteacher was appointed, the school has been inspected twice by Ofsted and was judged to 'require improvement' and then 'good'.
- The school is organised so that pupils are placed within four Phases and three Pathways. Phases are age-banded groups and Pathways are the curriculum contents suited to the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.
- The school is part of a large collaborative enterprise established by all the Kent special schools. The organisation has created a shared data-base using "Pupil Asset" software that provides a common yardstick on which the schools record and analyse information about pupil progress. The system has now been running for three years and is being reviewed.
- The school promotes distributed leadership and the extended team of 10 leaders took a full part in this review.
- The school has only recently joined Challenge Partners and this is its first review.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- This is the school's first Challenge Partners review.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) sets out the school's own judgements of its performance in relation to areas of development. All this suggests that the school is ambitious and committed to improvement.
- The SER also includes a very positive summary of a parent/carer survey and positive comments made by external organisations.
- The School Improvement Plan (SIP) lists the intended areas of development during the current school year, within a 3-year overall strategic plan.
- Senior leadership responsibilities have been thoughtfully revised very recently in recognition of the expanded role of the school and college. This is well co-ordinated with an on-going development of more distributed leadership. Members of the extended leadership team took an active role in the review and showed an impressive grasp of their responsibilities, outcomes within their area of responsibility and appropriate improvement activities.
- The school employs a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist and an art therapist in order to provide a comprehensive range of activities that support learning related to EHCP targets. The main focal points are fine and gross motor and co-ordination skills, speech and language, sensory integration, behaviour and emotional well-being. A particular feature of this provision is a programme of workshops for parents and carers so that they understand the different approaches and the ways in which they can support their children at home.
- The school was awarded the SMSC Gold Quality Mark in October 2018 – and so far is believed to be the only special school to have received this recognition. It is also working towards refreshing its Eco-School Award and a pupil committee has chosen energy, healthy eating and school grounds as the focus points for this year. This provision is well resourced, and imaginative, purposeful use is made of the school grounds.
- The arrangements for performance management (PM) and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment are clearly allied and well planned so that staff have good notice of activities in which they will be involved. Comprehensive records of PM reviews are maintained, as are records of observations. All this information drives a CPD programme that provides generic and personalised training and support. Online evaluation of the CPD programme indicates that staff value the level of training and support provided.

- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and focus on "*children being at the heart of everything done*" rather than possible judgements by external bodies. Nevertheless, the leaders are aware that their next Ofsted inspection is likely to be under the Section 8 framework and will therefore simply confirm that it continues to be a "good" school. They recognise that until some projects are completed the school will sit on the Ofsted cusp of "good/outstanding" and that to securely move beyond this cusp three on-going projects must be completed:-
    - Ensuring that all the elements of the PSHE curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils including those set out within their EHCPs. Individual PSHE targets being successfully met can then become key performance indicators along with the reading, writing and mathematics information already presented.
    - Revising the teaching and learning policy in the light of recent changes to monitoring and evaluation arrangements.
    - Completing the review of' the school's use of Pupil Asset to determine whether or not it fully meets the need to track pupil achievement and present an accurate analysis of all pupil progress. It may be necessary to adopt a different information base.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if…

…success criteria are included as reference points within the SER and the SIP so that clear measures of actual or intended improvement are apparent, in order to increase the effectiveness of self-evaluation and planning**.** When stating a conclusion, or referring to a judgement, the school should note the criteria and any grade descriptors used.

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

- This is the school's first Challenge Partners review.

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

- A continuum of 'wrap-around' provision is evident throughout the school. Learning programmes are highly personalised and flow from extensive multi-disciplinary collaboration. The Nursery provides a strong foundation for the later years and the 16-18 provision ensures that a wide range of experiences, including work placements, prepare students well for moving on from the school.

- In order to make appropriate provision for pupils who have widely varying needs the school has created a broad "creative" curriculum. Teachers use this well to plan individual pupil journeys along the curriculum pathway most suited to their needs.
- The most effective lessons are characterised by creative curriculum content, clear differentiation, staff subject knowledge, clear cross-curricular links and careful deployment of other adults in the room. These all encourage pupils to be ready for learning and to be highly engaged. Pupils are able to make clear that they understand what is expected of them. A 'weekend journal' produced in Phase 2 is a good example of how staff and pupils together to form a view of the learning undertaken during the week.
- Staff know the pupils extremely well. This is particularly evident when clear differentiation promotes just the right level of challenge.
- Pupil learning is often enhanced because well practised routines are followed, positive staff-pupil relationships encourage good behaviour, staff pitch their questions well and pupils are encouraged to take risks, prepare themselves for learning and manage their learning independently.
- Ambitious, successful, collaborative learning is a feature of the school and is very evident in the 16-18 provision.
- "Zones of Regulation" are embedded within all the provision made by the school and many families have been supported so that they can use the approach at home. The approach focuses on pupils using strategies to regulate their own behaviour and ensure that they are in the "green zone".
- Many pupils make clear progress in lessons because of the range of specific approaches used. These include total communication strategies for non-verbal pupils and strategies devised collaboratively by teachers and therapists for pupils with sensory needs, characteristics of autism and specific disabilities.
- Pupils take pride in their successes. Many take a particular interest in "Radio Oakley" that broadcasts news of their achievements.
- The use of ICT has been well developed throughout the school. A good deal of investment in resources and training has resulted in pupils acquiring the skills and confidence necessary to make safe, appropriate use of technology and the internet.
- The sports and leisure elements of the curriculum are strengths. They encourage greater confidence and resilience both of which lead to higher levels of engagement.

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

…other adults in the classroom maximise the effectiveness of their time.
…the pace of lessons is adjusted to ensure that pupils have opportunities to explore resources and staff have time to facilitate additional challenge.
…efforts are made to ensure that differentiation, full pupil engagement and clear learning goals are consistently strong features of all lessons.
…greater use of scaffolding is made for some pupils.
…good practice and knowledge of useful resources are more widely shared.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- During 2017-2018 over 88% of pupils made expected or better than expected progress towards 'Pupil Asset' targets in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The great majority of pupils reaching the end of Year 11 in 2018 were able to complete a number of accredited courses. These included OCT functional skills, Edexcel BTEC Art & Design, Home Cooking and Land Based Studies, AQA PSHE and Arts Award Explore. The 14 pupils in Year 11 achieved a total of 68 awards including 28 at Level 1.
- The great majority of students reaching the end of Year 13 in 2018 were also able to complete a number of accredited courses. These included courses pursued previously but at a higher level and Arts Award Performing Arts. The 14 students in Year 13 achieved a total of 34 awards including 16 at Level 1.
- Of the 14 Year 13 leavers in 2018 11 transferred to colleges. One student entered employment, another sought job seekers allowance and another is placed at a 'specialist post-16 institution'.
- During the Autumn Term 2018 over 95% of pupils made expected or better than expected progress towards 'Pupil Asset' targets in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As a result of thorough planning of individual learning programmes there are no significant difference in pupil outcomes between groups.

5. Area of Excellence

The school has not made a submission although there are a number of features that would be worth putting forward in future years.

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

Oakley is an outward-facing school and would like to extend its programme of activities by visiting other Challenge Partners special schools that have accredited areas of excellence. Further opportunities to attend Challenge Partners national conferences would also be helpful.

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.