

Written Report

CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	Heartlands High School
School Address:	Station Road, Wood Green, London N22 7ST
Hub School:	Compton

Telephone Number:	020 8826 1230
Email address:	office@heartlands.haringey.sch.uk

Unique Reference Number:	135844
Local Authority:	Haringey
Type of School:	Comprehensive
School Category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 – 16
Number on roll:	1076
Head teacher/Principal:	Executive headteacher – Simon Garrill Head of School – Elen Roberts

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	10 – 11 February 2016
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	27 February – 1 st March 2017
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES¹

School Improvement Strategies: Outstanding

Outcomes for Pupils are: Outstanding

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Good

Area of Excellence: Confirmed
English and literacy

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Heartlands High School appears to be moving 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

- The number of pupils at Heartlands High School is just above average.
- A significant proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups being: African, Caribbean, any other White background, White and Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi.
- Almost half of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Just over a half of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of students who receive special educational needs support and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan is much higher than the national average.
- There is a specialist resource provision for up to 29 pupils on the autistic spectrum.
- A very small number of pupils attend courses at Footsteps, Southgate College and Conel College.
- Pupils enter Year 7 with attainment that is significantly below the national average.
- Heartlands High School opened as a new school in September 2010 and converted to academy status in May 2013.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- The leadership of the school is impressive. Leaders are committed, passionate, enthusiastic individuals. The Head of School has high expectations of the senior leadership team who are hungry for a challenge. Performance management rewards those who perform well. The mathematics and English heads of department have both led their teams exceptionally well.
- The Head of School is unequivocal in her judgement about the school and knows that there is still some more work to do to reduce subject variation. Modern Foreign Languages and science in particular are a challenge. Ensuring quality first teaching across all subjects is a prime target. Lots of training and development is improving teaching; innovative practices are having a clear impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Leaders employ a wide range of innovative strategies to recruit and retain the best possible teachers. Packages on offer for new staff are attractive and close working with ITT providers for SCITT, GTP, teach first, SD and PGCE placement ensure better recruitment. Leaders maximise the effectiveness of middle leaders by employing them on the leadership spine.
- School priorities are sharp and focused well on weaknesses identified through rigorous self-evaluation. These are clearly understood by leaders at all levels and are well communicated. Systems are in place to track progress towards the objectives in the school improvement plan.
- Where there are weaknesses in teaching, senior leaders provide solid support and challenge as appropriate. As a result, in MFL there has been more focus on

developing a love of language and using the target language. Overall, quality assurance work has been rigorous and professional development has focused on challenge, feedback and independence.

- The new team in Design Technology is in place and colleagues are working well together. The department has higher expectations of what students can do. Teachers are getting to grips with the new curriculum and leaders have done all they can to ensure that coursework is moderated and checked.
- Geography is now fully staffed and the new head of faculty starts in September. An SLE from the Compton has supported the department effectively and, as a result, the quality of teaching is improving. Extended writing has been a focus and the department has had a good emphasis on preparing students thoroughly for the examination.
- Marking parties have provided clear guidance about what is expected of marking. This has enabled teachers to know what the expectations are. 'Top tips' has also helped in this regard.
- Faculty leaders check that teachers are challenging all students. 'Underachievement where we see it'. Students who are red and below target should be in receipt of relevant challenge in class which encourages a clear focus on data led teaching. Middle leaders are empowered to take real charge of their areas of responsibility.
- Design Technology results were a disappointment last year. The head of faculty left and the one remaining teacher was an NQT. There has since been a successful recruitment drive which has paid dividends and the newly recruited team are performing well. They have been supported highly effectively through mentoring and buddying.
- The Head of School and senior leaders are responding proactively to the evident challenges in geography, Modern Foreign Languages and Design Technology including the use of big group teaching, working with an external SLE and 'Assessment Box moderation and analysis'. There is still some concern about the humanities results this coming year but a full range of interventions is in place and staffing is now stable; a new head of department has been appointed for September.
- Challenges in recruiting science teachers have been a barrier to improvement but a new programme in place to tackle this has yet to bear fruit but is a proactive move forward. Targeted support plans are in place to help teachers in the department to improve and to reduce teacher variability. Regular assessments in science are helping leaders to formulate a robust set of data.
- There has been some concern about the accuracy of predictions in Modern Foreign Languages. Effective actions taken by leaders are tackling this and some deficiencies in the curriculum which were uncovered during an external review. The school works well with an impressively wide range of external partners to maximise the outcomes and to develop staff.

Even Better If ...

... through line management, all senior leaders alongside middle leaders, tracked more closely the progress towards targets in key stage 4.

... leaders considered ways to intervene more quickly to improve the quality of marking and feedback.

... all middle leaders delegated effectively and managed their time well.

Pupil Outcomes

- The school is highly ambitious and sets aspirational targets. Leaders have worked hard to gain a clear understanding of the new grading system. They know where students are in their learning and what progress they should be making. Predictions currently sit at English and mathematics 5+, 51% (74% 9-4).
- Progress 8 outcomes for 2016 were highly positive for the school. Progress 8 was significantly above average overall, for disadvantaged students and in English and mathematics.
- A flight path model is used for setting targets which corresponds to 4+ levels of progress. Leaders are clear about what constitutes good and better rates of progress. Effective support is provided for the lowest attaining students and teaching staff know and understand what entry below Grade 1 means in terms of attainment.
- Data is analysed forensically and used rigorously to drive improvement. Leaders make good use of external consultants and AQA examiners to ensure stringent moderation. This worked well last year to ensure predictions were accurate. Gaps are identified and plugged through additional interventions. The achievement and curriculum leader has a clear strategic overview of the intervention timetable and directs students actively towards particular subjects.
- Saturday schools have been run differently this year following an evaluation, and input via external agencies has now been implemented on Saturdays which has been more controlled, structured and strategic. There has been much more of a focus on quality first teaching in school but as yet it is too early to tell whether this change in strategy has been successful.
- High attaining disadvantaged students perform well. Only small gaps are evident in mathematics and English and in EBACC this is in line. High attaining disadvantaged students perform well in the open bucket. There has been a reform of the curriculum to ensure that the open bucket is better populated.
- Some variability across subjects is evident although there have been considerable successes in geography, history and design technology to reduce this. Subject reviews have taken place to identify clear strengths and weaknesses but MFL remains an issue. The department has had help and support from an SLE and work has been done to ensure that coursework has been standardised and moderated accurately. There remains work to be done to challenge the most able, particularly in

Year 7, where students enter with a wide variety of foreign language skills. There is a move towards baseline testing and a more 'setted' model, better understanding of the new curriculum and on developing speaking and listening. There has also been a focus on enabling more accurate predictions.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What Went Well

- There is some exceptionally good teaching in mathematics. Classrooms provide a pleasant learning environment with examples of outstanding and graded work displayed for students to look at. Books are well marked and well-presented and show examples of misconceptions being addressed effectively. Teachers make learning interesting and motivating through, for example, the use of a good range of differentiated activities as seen in Years 10 and 11. Students praise the level of challenge in mathematics and say that it is helpful to struggle in order to learn.
- In English, lessons are well planned and prepared. Previous learning is built upon successfully with good stretch and challenge included. The least able are taught very well and are provided with precise instructions and well supported learning.
- Despite some issues in the science department, there is some excellent teaching. Leaders are trying to strengthen science through the sharing good practice and have been strategic in their approaches to supporting teaching in other ways.
- Good peer assessment takes place in English and science. FIT is very helpful and students say that in English this is particularly effective.
- Generally, teachers have high expectations of what students can do. For example, in history Year 11 were looking at the utility of sources. They had good opportunities to discuss and work together. Books were marked effectively and showed explicit teaching towards the examination. The teacher knew her students well and clear lines of questioning checked their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers use data effectively to plan learning. This was particularly apparent during the review in computing and business. Results are impressive in business because of particularly effective teaching which maximises performance in examinations. Students praise teaching in computing and say that it challenges them to achieve well. Business studies teaching promotes engagement through the use of a variety of interesting strategies.
- Teaching assistants provide high quality support for students especially for those with significant difficulties. They have become much more proactive in their approach as a result of effective professional development.
- During tutorial sessions, citizenship and character saw groups of students debating complex issues. Another group was observed developing study skills so that revision was more effective. Some good guidance was evident.

- Drama books in Years 9 and 10 are superb and should serve to support an improved set of results. Practical work was enjoyed by students who were enthusiastic and motivated. They joined in well with the 'physical theatre'.
- During the SEN walk, reviewers were very impressed by the 'RISE' programme. Students were getting on well in their lessons and teachers had clearly considered strategies to ensure students learn as well as possible. Marking was impressive. The programme successfully facilitates students' re-entry to mainstream.

Even Better If ...

... teachers progressed to a more risk taking stance. (Ensure that staff allow students to get on with it and learn more for themselves. Allow students to make mistakes.)

... teachers employed a variety of strategies, through questioning, to ensure students think more deeply about their learning.

... teachers developed students' independence through encouraging more collaboration during lessons.

... inconsistencies in marking and feedback continued to be ironed out.

Quality of Area of Excellence

English and literacy

Why has this area been identified as a strength?

- Progress in English is exceptionally good. In 2016 the school was in the top 4% nationally, top 3% for disadvantaged students and the top 1% for higher attainers.
- Ofsted identified English and literacy as key areas of strength in the recent inspection.
- Quality assurance procedures in the school have shown English to be a considerable strength. Teaching is outstanding because planning, AFL, marking and progress are consistently of high quality. Teachers take the lead on sharing best practice.
- The department works effectively as a team and staff are very well motivated. Teachers are innovative and dynamic, making students' learning experience inspiring.
- Enrichment opportunities are wide ranging, for example writers have visited the school, 'First Story' programme, 'Debate Mate', involving hosting other schools, have all been very successful.
- The Renaissance reading programme is a credit to the English department and has been totally embedded across the school. "Sunrise", in briefings, sees whole school reading taking place, including all staff.
- Duologue Reading takes place in the library, where VT is used highly effectively for students to nurture each other's reading.
- The library is well resourced and popular with students. The Renaissance Reading Programme is also high profile here and the school has introduced schemes such as

the "Platinum Club" which rewards students who read avidly. Reading and Literacy are clearly a key strength of the school.

- The school shares its practice with a number of other schools nearby, both primary and secondary. In addition schools have been supported to improve provision for dyslexia for example and to develop whole school approaches to literacy, marking and policy making.

What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

- The forensic use of tracking systems has been crucial in targeting students for intervention. Data analysis meetings with staff and regular line management meetings have ensured that action plans are relevant and personalised.
- Specific literacy interventions have been effective such as GROW, Fresh Start, Inference teaching, Lexia and phonics.
- A strong emphasis on reading and literacy across the school has had a clear impact because the English leader works closely and effectively with the literacy coordinator.
- The SLE has introduced an effective reading programme that has been well embedded across the school.
- The Teaching Alliance is used effectively to share good practice and to moderate accurately.
- Literacy catch up funding has been used effectively.
- Staff have been persistent in gaining additional funding for the department, for example £10,000 from Foyles to buy low reading age books.

What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

- Clearly the English results are excellent, for both boys and girls. Boys' achievement is in line with that of girls'. Strategies such as the boys' literacy "Champions League" offers rewards such as Kindles and this has been well received.
- Excellent impact of the one-to-one interventions. In English Language, 89% of students made 3+ levels of progress, 54% achieved 4 levels. In English Literature, 94% achieved 3+ levels of progress, 63% achieved 4 levels.
- An increase of 14 months on reading ages within a period of 9 months across the school.

What is the name and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Elen Roberts
office@heartlands.haringey.sch.uk

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

Following discussion with the Head of School, the school would like some additional support with recruiting science and MFL teachers.

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.