

Name of School:	Heartlands High School
Head teacher/Principal:	Elen Roberts (Head of School) Simon Garrill (Executive Headteacher)
Hub:	Compton
School type:	Mixed comprehensive
MAT (if applicable):	Heartlands Community Trust

Estimate at this QA Review:	Good
Date of this Review:	15-17/01/2018
Estimate at last QA Review	Outstanding
Date of last QA Review	27/02-01/03/2017
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	10-11/02/2016

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	Good
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Good

Area of Excellence	Accredited
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	English and literacy, 01/03/2017
Overall Estimate	Good

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. Information about the school

- Heartlands is an average sized 11-16 school with a slight gender imbalance resulting in more boys than girls in all but one year group.
- A significant number of students come from minority ethnic backgrounds with the largest being African, Caribbean, any other White background, and Bangladeshi.
- The school is within the highest national percentile for pupil premium, with free school meals students at over double the national average.
- There is a higher than national average proportion of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) within the school.
- Just under half the students speak English as a second language.
- Students enter Year 7 with attainment levels significantly below national average.
- The school has an autism unit that caters for 32 students.
- Most students are educated on site with a small percentage attending courses at Footsteps, Southgate College and Conel College.
- Heartlands opened as a new school in 2010 and became an academy in 2013 as part of the Heartlands Community Trust.
- In April 2017 the school achieved teaching school status.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Follow up from previous review

- The school has made significant progress in more effective tracking of Key Stage 4 students in a process that directly involves senior leadership, middle leaders and class room teachers.
- The quality of marking and assessment has improved from the last quality assurance review through greater consistency and accuracy facilitated by external moderation.

HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

- Middle leaders effectively delegate within subject areas and efficiently manage a tight time schedule.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- A programme of sustained improvement strategies aimed at resolving immediate and long-term issues is a strength of the school. Actions to resolve 2017 outcomes in modern languages and geography are in place, alongside planning for Year 9 provision that offers clear potential to improve 2020 outcomes.
- Past improvement strategies in history and technology have delivered sustained positive outcomes reflected in 2017 data and 2018 predictions.
- Senior leaders have a vision and direction for improvement that engages wider stakeholders, with middle leaders being key agents for change. An example of this is the development of careers education, where student interviews have provided them with clearer signposting to possible destinations.
- Middle leaders receive the training and support to be active agents of improvement and there is mutual trust between senior and middle leaders. Strategies are clearly communicated, evaluated, and supported by user friendly documentation and appropriate management systems such as effective line management.
- Attention has been given to the accurate and effective assessment of student performance with a clear whole school structure for assessment, follow-up and impact that has explicit accountability in the system. This results in bespoke student intervention to remedy performance shortfalls.
- There are effective links with other schools and organisations to promote school improvement. Compton, for example, supports geography development and joint moderation facilitated improvements to mathematics assessment procedures.
- The school has responded to recruitment and retention needs through a review of recruitment strategies and a professional development programme to generate career progression, creating a 'buzz of excitement' around teaching and learning. These have proved successful.
- Professional development and school improvement are facilitated by sharing good practice through a structured programme that engages the teaching staff in initiatives such as 'Teaching Shapes' and the 'Heart of the Heartlands' format. Observation evidence supports the school's view that this has helped to improve consistency in teaching and learning.
- The recently appointed deputy headteacher is helping the school to focus on new pedagogy with an emphasis on research-based teaching and learning. Staff triads, for example, have helped teachers to reflect on good practice which they have then incorporated into their own practice.

HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

- A review and subsequent action plan have improved student attendance through more effective use of support staff, the pastoral system and communication strategies. Personalised student support has had a positive impact on reengaging previously disengaged students and parents.
- The school is in the process of completing and implementing a significant curriculum review that consulted with a wide range of stakeholders. This offers the potential for long term sustained improvement to student outcomes through a provision more clearly linked to student aspiration and school strengths.

2.3 School Strategies - Even better if...

...the recently undertaken curriculum review led to a curriculum provision bespoke to student need in a manner that contributes to effective student learning and improved outcomes at Key Stage 4 assessment.

...teaching and learning initiatives generated consistently high-quality classroom practice within an ethos of research-based learning that engages all teaching staff in contributing to whole school standards.

...improvement strategies reflected an awareness of student sub-group outcomes with provision to meet the educational needs of specific student groups, for example the decline in girls' achievement, the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students and outcomes for high ability students.

3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Follow up from previous review

- The school has progressed with greater expectation of independent student learning. Lessons focus on extended written tasks and there is a revised whole school policy on effective homework facilitated by the Show My Homework webbased application.
- Teachers use high quality questioning in many lessons, often combined with thinking time, to facilitate deeper thought regarding subject understanding.
- There are good examples of collaboration between students promoting effective learning across different areas of the curriculum, such as English and drama.
- Students' work shows that marking and assessment have become more consistent and accurate. There is increased collaborative moderation with other schools and greater faculty accountability.

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

- Teaching and learning practice within the classroom is consistent with whole school strategies, including the behaviour management strategy and assessment policy. This is supported by teachers' subject knowledge delivered at an appropriate level to each age group to help students access learning.
- Classrooms and the wider school provide a positive learning environment, with well organised rooms, stimulating displays and appropriate learning resources.
- The relationships between teachers and students are consistently positive, reflect mutual respect and contribute to an effective atmosphere for learning. Students behave well across the school with a sustained focus on learning.
- Students' books reflect school assessment policy through use of green pen, target sheets and student response. This demonstrates an improvement on past performance. Students' books, irrespective of ability, are well presented, show pride in their work and indicate that students make progress over time.
- The best assessment practice is illustrated by detailed teacher feedback ensuring students have clear direction for improvement. Written feedback is supported by teachers' verbal input, facilitating students' progress in lessons.
- In lessons through both key stages, there are clear links between subject content and skills to the relevant assessment requirements to aid student exam performance.
- There is a well-established approach to assessment. Data is used to plan subsequent learning and interventions. For example, teachers used a 'killer facts' sheet in history in response to identified deficiencies in students' knowledge.
- The data is communicated to students through user-friendly documents. These help them to understand their current performance and areas for improvement. The bulk of students understand their target grades and next steps.
- The quality and accuracy of school assessment have improved through extensive links with other schools. These have facilitated the moderation of assessment decisions across both key stages.
- There are strong cross-curricular links with literacy across the school, particularly in the use of subject-specific language. The accelerated reading scheme is having a positive impact on outcomes for all students.
- The best quality lessons are characterised by clear explanations and effective questioning by the teacher. Teachers involve the whole class and challenge students to think more deeply by providing students with appropriate thinking time to encourage high quality answers.
- In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of all students and provide appropriate levels of challenge. This is particularly the case in English low ability groups and mixed ability maths groups.

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

...high ability students consistently experienced appropriate challenge within their lessons through high quality questioning to develop deeper learning, extended writing tasks to facilitate detailed response, clarity of teacher explanation to enable them to work independently and reference to wider reading and research opportunities.

...teachers helped all students to use formal academic language consistently when answering questions, writing answers and within class discussion.

...teachers ensured that high quality homework more effectively developed existing learning or prepared students for subsequent lessons.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- The 2017 Progress 8 (P8) data placed the school just above the national average but demonstrated a decline on their own 2016 outcomes. This also contrasted with 2015 outcomes. A significant number of students were entered for the 2017 Ebacc but the overall results reflected a decline in their P8 performance from 2016. The high attainers were just above national levels, with middle attainers making stronger relative progress and low attainers just above average progress. For Attainment 8 data the school was marginally below the national figure.
- There was a 2017 in-school gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged student outcomes. Compared to national figures, disadvantaged students showed the slightest of negative residuals, but were still placed above national figures. 2017 data also reflected a decline in girls' progress since 2015.
- English and mathematics continue to perform above national standards for 4+ levels of progress with English also exceeding national figures at 5+ levels of progress. However, there is concern in mathematics for the outcome of high ability students.
- Students' performance was relatively strong in English, art, business, music, computing, sociology, and technology in 2017. Present data indicates this is sustained or improved for the present Year 11. There are some inconsistencies in mathematics and science although there were clear areas of good performance, such as for middle prior attainers in mathematics and outcomes in single sciences. Again, present predictions indicate improvement for 2018 outcomes.
- The outcomes for modern foreign languages (MFL) and geography in the open bucket section of the Ebacc had a significantly negative impact on the overall P8

HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

outcomes. Each subject had different issues such as leadership or the quality of teaching, which are being addressed and current cohort data indicates improvement.

- Predictions for 2018 results indicate an overall improvement for P8 outcomes across the curriculum and relative improvement for the key issues of concern such as in mathematics for high prior attainers.
- The outcomes for disadvantaged students will continue to be below the wider cohort in 2018 but long-term changes and data for the present Years 9 and 10 indicate improvement for 2019 and beyond. The school is realistically viewing improvement strategies for geography and MFL to require a two-year programme. Results are predicted to improve in 2018 but matching the wider curriculum in 2019.
- While accepting the inherent national issues with accurate GCSE predictions at the present time, the school's information suggests there is a sound evidence base for the projected 2018 improvements. Current Year 10 entered GCSE study with positive Key Stage 3 outcomes and their present progress indicates the potential for further improvement in 2019.
- A new assessment model for Key Stage 3 is being embedded at present and links outcomes to subsequent Key Stage 4 expectations. The present data indicates good Key Stage 3 progress across the school, but the system is being refined to ensure more accurate assessment outcomes.

5. Area of Excellence

English and literacy

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

- The 2016 Ofsted report identified English and literacy as key areas of strength and subsequent outcomes and internal evaluation have reinforced this conclusion. Progress in English remains strong and, although 2017 saw a decline in results, the performance remained robust in the national context.
- Literacy initiatives continue to have a positive impact on students' attainment and progress. Teaching strategies linked to the on-entry attainment and wider profile of students entering the school result in substantial and sustained progress. For example, students who started school below age-related expectations improved their reading at an accelerated rate to bring their reading age in line with their chronological age.

HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

- Internal quality assurance measures indicate sustained high-quality provision for English and literacy, with skilled teaching that reflects thorough preparation, specific planning, effective use of questions, clarity of explanation and helpful feedback. Learning relationships are strong. Planning shows that teachers use their knowledge of individual students to accommodate their personal learning needs. Effective programmes, such as 'Beyond Words' and 'Champions League Reading', inspire greater student progress and engagement.
- Subject leadership has a passion and vision that results in motivated staff and effective team work.

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

- The English subject leader is employed on the senior leadership scale to enhance the focus on teaching and learning and to ensure a whole school emphasis.
- The school has invested in training higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) through nasen and ensures that subject-based HLTAs have a literacy focus.
- Five teachers bring extra expertise from their involvement with marking GCSE English papers.
- There is forensic tracking of impact and performance to inform subsequent decisions, which are systematically followed up.
- Effective reading programmes have been established and embedded across the school.
- Leaders make significant use of the relevant expertise of English staff in delivering staff training.

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

- The 2017 data placed GCSE student outcomes in the 20th percentile nationally. Internal data indicates the potential for 2018 outcomes in English to be in the top 5% nationally for progress, a standard achieved in the past.
- The 2017 English literature results for levels 9-4 were significantly above the national average.
- There was no gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students in the 2017 GCSE English results.
- There has been a significant increase in the use of the library over the last academic year and the Key Stage 3 data continues to reflect the progress made using the Accelerated Reader programme for all students.

HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

- There is sustained engagement with a local hub of 26 schools, many of which have come to visit the school to receive training on Accelerated Reader and other literacy initiatives.

5.4 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Andrew Lloyd / Jasleine Sangha

Assistant headteacher for accelerated progress and inclusion (Head of English)

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

- An expansion of subject development programmes for maths and science.
- Greater knowledge and possible involvement with the Challenge the Gap project.



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR

HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

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.



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW
REVIEW REPORT FOR
HEARTLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

of 10