

1. Information about the school

- Old Palace Primary School is a two-form entry primary school from 4–11 years in Bromley-by-Bow in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) over the past six years is twice the national average and the deprivation indicator three times the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and the vast majority are from multi-ethnic backgrounds of predominantly Bangladeshi heritage. The school does not have high pupil mobility though there are mid-phase admissions into all year groups.
- The school has a lower percentage than that seen nationally of pupils who receive special educational needs (SEN) support and a higher percentage who have a SEN statement or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This reflects the school's strong early intervention and strategies to address under-achievement quickly.
- The school has developed strong partnerships, with, for example, local secondary schools and with Goldsmiths College, particularly in teacher training.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Follow up from previous review

- This is the first QA review for the school.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Leaders have established a happy, purposeful and supportive culture and ethos where staff want to work and pupils want to learn.
- School leaders are calm, measured and determined. They respond quickly to concerns, to matters arising from school self-evaluation actions and to those from improvement actions.
- Leaders plan effective strategic actions in response to, for example, changes to the curriculum and assessment, recruitment and retention issues and in response to budget constraints.
- Leaders have developed and maintained excellent outcomes against national benchmarking across all key stages.
- School self-evaluation procedures are embedded into the culture of the school and into actions by leaders. They are robust, inclusive and rigorous and lead naturally into school development planning, timely actions and evaluation of impact.
- School leaders have successfully addressed all the actions for improvement from the last Ofsted inspection report. The effective impact of actions planned by leaders can be clearly seen in outcomes across the school. Actions from the beginning of the current academic year planned to address the progress from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 in reading, for boys and for the high

- prior-attainment group, are already having a positive impact.
- Leaders very effectively retain staff and excellent distributive leadership is a feature of the school. By giving staff a wide range of opportunities to develop leadership capacity the school has maintained a highly effective leadership team retaining and recruiting effective leaders and developing less experienced staff to middle leadership through to senior leadership. Leaders are very well supported and there are clear lines of accountability.
 - Leaders have planned and developed an excellent broad and balanced curriculum with embedded and sophisticated cross-curricular links and many enrichment opportunities.
 - Leaders have established very strong SEN provision which is planned and evaluated from very good provision mapping. Leaders have enabled staff to identify successfully pupils who are under-achieving and address this with highly effective intervention groups. For others where special educational needs are identified, excellent provision ensures that the majority make good progress from their starting points.
 - Leaders have initiated robust, rigorous and embedded summative assessment processes that triangulate teacher assessment and a variety of standardised tests.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

- ...leaders capitalised on their decision to become increasingly outward facing.
- ...leaders initiated action-research projects across staff groups to investigate how provision can be further refined.
- ...leaders planned additional moderation activities in reading so that the increased discussions on progress and attainment in reading improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

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

- This is the first QA review for the school.

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

- There is abundant evidence of a broad, balanced and rich curriculum seen in the excellent communal and classroom displays of pupil work. The well-planned curriculum has a multitude of cross-curricular links and this, alongside good resources for learning, ensures high levels of engagement in lessons amongst pupils across the school.
- There are high expectations of learning behaviours and learning is calm and purposeful. Teachers take opportunities to motivate pupils with praise in response to good learning outcomes and pupils work respectfully alongside each other.
- In some lessons, sophisticated scaffolding linked to the starting points of pupils, supports good progress and the strong classroom environment. Good working

walls enable pupils to use the classroom environment to support their learning and promote independent learning.

- Non-teaching and additional teaching staff are deployed effectively and offer good support for learning both within classrooms and in small-group settings. Intervention groups for targeted pupils provide excellent support for learning, whether for pupils who are making less than good progress or who have SEN.
- Good curriculum planning ensures effective differentiation and personalisation to meet the learning needs of groups and individual pupils.
- In reading, teachers use high quality challenging texts that are well-matched to pupils' reading levels, plan reading opportunities to share knowledge and remind pupils of strategies to read independently. Good use is made of pupils' phonics skills across all year groups to support reading and writing.
- The marking policy is consistently applied across the school and pupils receive effective feedback during lessons because of on-going assessment. In some lessons good use of questioning is used to reinforce language and vocabulary, check understanding, address misconceptions and enable pupils to justify their thinking.
- Across the school, the starting points for teaching and learning are at age-related expectations with consistency in expectations amongst teachers supported by strong subject knowledge, particularly in some year groups. Age-appropriate challenge and differentiation are used throughout the school.
- Key teaching and learning strategies, such as using kinaesthetic actions to support learning, talking partners to both provide oral rehearsal for learning and encourage pupils to work collaboratively, are used successfully across the school.
- Pupils appreciate and understand the cross-curricular subject links and the sequence of teaching in topic work.

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

- ...teachers refined the use of questioning to ensure this is consistently used to move forward learning.
- ...the use of practical resources was increased to support the implementation of the mastery approach in mathematics and teachers ensured that more able pupils continued to be challenged.
- ...less use of worksheets was made in topic lessons and teachers implemented the presentation policy to bring about consistently high standards of presentation in pupils' work.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Baseline assessments show that most pupils join the school at starting points below what is typical for their age. The good level of development (GLD) dipped in 2017 to just below that nationally. School analysis shows that this was because a significant percentage of the cohort joined the Reception year a term later in January. Pupils currently in Year 2 have continued to make good progress from their end-of-stage summative assessment.

- In 2017, the percentage of Year 1 pupils who reached the required standard in the phonics check remained above the national average. All groups except the disadvantaged were above that nationally. A small number of disadvantaged pupils with SEN did not meet the required standard.
- In Key Stage 1 in 2017 at the expected standard, results fell slightly from 2016 due to plausible cohort factors. They were just below the national average in reading and above average in mathematics and writing. At greater depth results were above the national average in all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils exceeded the national percentages at both the expected standard and greater depth in all subjects, except the expected standard in reading, where they were just below.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2017, progress from the end of Key Stage 1 was above average for reading and well above average for writing and mathematics. Progress for disadvantaged pupils was above that of disadvantaged pupils nationally in all subjects. Combined attainment was above that nationally both at the expected standard and at greater depth for all pupils and disadvantaged pupils. Attainment in all subjects was above the national average at the expected standard and at greater depth.
- Progress across the curriculum in all year groups was strong, with evidence provided from monitoring and evaluation, subject assessment data and scrutiny of work. The high priority given to non-core subject provision and cross-curricular links provided many opportunities for the application of skills and deepening of knowledge.
- Any identified in-school gaps from 2017, for example, between boys and girls, are being closed this year.
- The excellent outcomes are because leaders have developed robust, rigorous and triangulated assessment policies and procedures. The tracking of pupils' progress is fortnightly when both groups and individual pupils are identified, actions agreed and their impact evaluated during the next pupil-progress meeting. Excellent outcomes are supported by sophisticated and forensically detailed data analysis, with very strong intervention programmes and timely actions.

5. Area of Excellence

Writing for disadvantaged pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL)

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

At both the end of key stage 1 and the end of key stage 2 progress and attainment in writing for disadvantaged pupils who have EAL is consistently in-line, above or well above the national averages for all pupils.

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

- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils is closely tracked following well-established school procedures and target setting is used to address any gaps between groups. Highly effective intervention groups are used to close gaps and one-to-one sessions are held with parents of disadvantaged pupils on how to support them with their writing at home. Attainment profiles are regularly updated and when necessary further interventions planned.
- Quality-first teaching in writing is supported by medium term plans which embed the school's approach to writing. The plans include targets which are matched to the genre being taught, which are shared at the beginning of the unit and assessed at the end.
- Fiction and non-fiction texts are carefully selected to link to the topic and a pre-teach session is used to support pupils who are new to English, which introduces them to new topic vocabulary. Very strong cross-curricular links support excellence in writing.
- New vocabulary is added to a working wall which pupils refer to when they are writing. Peer assessment, alongside teachers' marking, supports pupils in improving and editing their work and strong modelling of writing by teachers provides pupils with good models for their writing.

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

Key stage 2 outcomes

Attainment

At the end of key stage 2 attainment in writing was above the national average for pupils with EAL at both the expected standard and greater depth in 2016 and 2017. For disadvantaged pupils, it was at the expected standard in 2016. In 2017, despite a large proportion who were disadvantaged and had SEN, it was just below the national average. Progress in writing from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 is well above average and has been in quintile 1 since 2015.

Progress

Level 2 – all pupils progressed to the expected standard and four to greater depth
Level 3 – four out of five pupils progressed to greater depth.

Key Stage 1 outcomes

Attainment

Attainment in writing was above the national average for EAL pupils at both the expected standard and greater depth in 2016 and 2017. For disadvantaged pupils, writing was above national at the expected standard, at greater depth it was in line with national in 2016 and above national in 2017.

Progress

Emerging – eight out of 11 pupils progressed to the expected standard

Expected – all pupils progressed to the expected standard and four to greater depth

Exceeding – all pupils progressed to greater depth.

Other evidence includes:-

- Scrutiny of pupil work
- Learning walks and evaluation days
- Provision maps and analysis of the impact of interventions

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

Following this first Challenge Partners QA Review, the headteacher would like to consider carefully what additional support the school would like from the Challenge Partners network.

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.