

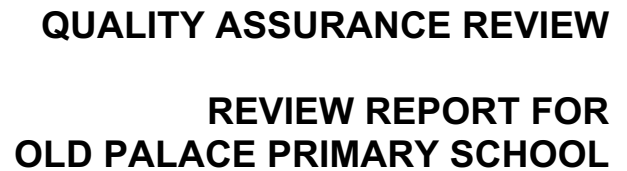


QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

**REVIEW REPORT FOR
OLD PALACE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Name of School:	Old Palace Primary School
Headteacher/Principal:	Gary Palmer
Hub:	Inspire Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Not applicable

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	25/04/2022
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading
Date of last QA Review	11/03/2020
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	06/07/2009



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	Systematic Vocabulary Development - leading to writing at greater depth.
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Previously accredited valid areas of excellence Foundation Subject Leadership

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.

1. Context and character of the school

Old Palace Primary School is a two-form entry primary school with 409 pupils on roll. There is a large leadership team comprising the headteacher, two deputy headteachers and four assistant headteachers who lead year group teams. The headteacher has been in post since 2007.

It serves one of the most deprived wards in the country. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds the majority having Bangladeshi heritage and they arrive at school with little or no English. Over half are disadvantaged pupils which is much higher than average. Mobility is low both for pupils and staff. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) and an education, health and care plan (EHCP) is higher than average.

The curriculum is designed to give pupils varied experiences and expand their horizons, making the most of the school's proximity to London. School leaders adapt the 'Jigsaw' scheme for personal, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Science, geography and history are taught through topics.

2.1 Leadership at all levels – What went well

- Leaders are ambitious and determined. They constantly reflect on the impact of their decisions so that the education provided by the school is continually improving. All the work of the school is focussed on providing an aspirational and relevant curriculum for the children of the families in the local community. Relationships and strong teamwork are at the core of all that they do.
- Leaders timetable staffing very specifically. Children in Reception are taught phonics in small groups lasting 20 minutes. The teaching is precise and addresses sound recognition, decoding, synthesis and writing so that children's skills progress rapidly. All the wider leadership team teach to enable pupils to work in smaller groups and make the best use of resources.
- Leaders have carefully planned and sequenced all subjects of the curriculum to provide pupils with a depth of knowledge and skills beyond the requirements of the national curriculum. For example, pupils learn to read music notation and play several instruments. Leaders carefully choose topics that enable history, geography and science knowledge and skills to be well sequenced. For example, children experience hatching eggs in Reception, so they understand how that applies to penguins for the story used in Year 2.
- Middle leaders work highly effectively in curriculum teams. All teachers are involved in these so that succession is built in, and everyone has ownership and responsibility for the curriculum. This enables effective subject links to be made and supports early career teachers' development. Foundation subject leadership

was recognised as an area of excellence in 2020.

- Leaders have significant experience and skills to plan and deliver high quality, focussed continuing professional development for teachers. For example, the mathematics leader delivers training across the whole of southeast London through the 'Maths Hub'. The mathematics leader has trained teachers to deliver the 'mastery of number' project, and this has significantly improved pupils' skills in number and subitising especially in Reception and Key Stage 1. Recently, for example, teachers received training on teaching the computing curriculum and design and technology.
- Subject leaders are highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. All subjects are highly valued. Leaders are continually reviewing the most effective way of teaching. For example, the PSHCE coordinator has worked with teachers to adapt and teach a purchased scheme consistently each week. Pupils, therefore, know how to contribute and work successfully in groups. Pupils in Year 4, for example, identified complex feelings of jealousy and how to prevent scenarios turning into bullying incidents.
- Teachers' high expectations of pupils' achievements are consistent in all subjects. Specialist teachers teach music and French. Highly competent and knowledgeable subject leaders support their colleagues to teach science, art, PSHCE, physical education (PE), computing and religious education (RE) extremely well. They provide the medium-term planning and 'surgeries' to develop teachers' knowledge and skills in the subject. Pupils in a Year 5 RE lesson were able to describe different meanings of 'the soul' discussing these maturely and showing respect for each other's opinions. Pupils in a Year 3 PE lesson learnt badminton skills, knowing and using the terms, serve and rally correctly.
- Governors are highly knowledgeable about the school and the community it serves. They know its strengths and ensure that the budget is allocated effectively so that there is almost no gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. They work closely with senior leaders to check the work of the school and have ensured that they have the skills to hold leaders to account.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...

...leaders continued to develop staff skills as facilitators of learning through action research projects.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Teachers plan units of English systematically over a three-week period. Each text is explored in detail and used as a model for the writing genre being taught. Then pupils write an extended piece independently with a clear purpose. Pupils in Year 4 for example used sentence starters and key vocabulary to describe the effects

of air raids in a letter to a friend. They understood how to communicate this to the reader well.

- Pupils enjoy reading. Teachers suggest texts for each year group using a 'Tube Map' to support pupils' choices of books of similar genres to read. The class texts are chosen to provide high quality reading experiences and links with the termly topics, also raising topics for wider discussion that link to PSHCE. These are adapted and provided in simpler forms for pupils with SEND so they can be fully involved and have access to the stories and themes.
- Pupils in Year 6 for example, when reading 'Trash' understood the lives of children working on a rubbish dump and the attitudes of the police to them in another country. Pupils have their own copy of books and take them home to read. Year 2 pupils eagerly explained that 'two boy penguins don't lay eggs, but the kind zookeeper gave them one to hatch' and they looked after it and ultimately, the chick well.
- Year group leaders work with teachers to evaluate pupils' progress precisely every two weeks. They adjust groups and provide additional support if any slight slowing of progress is evident. Teachers group pupils according to ability in English lessons to teach skills precisely that enable pupils to progress well from their starting points and address misconceptions rapidly.
- Pupils in Year 1 used 'Talk for Writing' actions and oral re-telling to recall the main events for a recount of the St George's Day picnic the previous week. This supported their recall of key vocabulary, time connectives and past tense verbs, highly successfully. They then matched these with the success criteria, to write the recount.
- Teachers have assessed pupils' phonic skills precisely in Years 1 and 2. They have specifically taught any missing knowledge to enable pupils to catch up with learning that was lost during the pandemic. In recent phonics assessments, an increased proportion of Year 2 pupils now have the skills in phonics that would be expected.
- Teachers have high expectations for all pupils including those who are disadvantaged and those working at greater depth. As a result, pupils are challenged and make advances in their learning over and above expected standards. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils used accurate vocabulary to set word problems for their peers involving identifying numbers to three decimal places.
- Pupils in Year 2 were able to explain that a one-kilogram weight was heavier than a 100 gram one and the effect that would have on balance scales. The teacher progressively and systematically introduced the vocabulary, referring to what pupils already knew from the day before. By the end of the lesson pupils understood that a kilogram was 1000 grams and could use 'heavier' and 'heaviest' in the correct context.
- The mathematics leader plans units of work precisely and each one starts with an investigation lesson, enabling teachers to assess what pupils already know and build learning highly successfully. Older pupils confidently explained how teachers

always provide a range of challenge in the work that is set so that pupils can choose the level of challenge and practice skills. Teachers use 'reflection prompts' for pupils to record what they have learnt, enabling them to accurately articulate their progress.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

... teachers provided more opportunities for open-ended tasks that enable pupils to explore, discuss and be more independent in their learning.

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

- During the lockdowns, leaders ensured that all pupils had access to a device at home to enable them to participate in the online learning provided. Staff were in frequent contact with families and delivered timetabled on-line lessons each day. When pupils returned to school, leaders have used the recovery premium to ensure that familiar staff work highly effectively with pupils who need additional individual teaching to enable them to achieve at age related expectations.
- The special educational needs coordinator ensures that support staff are trained well in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. They work effectively to facilitate pupils' full participation in lessons. For example, a pupil in a Year 4 PHSCE lesson fully participated in group discussions because of the visual materials provided.
- Teachers plan interventions precisely and use well proven ones for short periods. The timetabling of these ensures that pupils have full access to all the subjects in the curriculum. The Nuffield Early Language Interventions are delivered by two specifically trained teaching assistants and the time to do the activities is protected so that children are well taught.
- The school employs a counsellor and pupils know how to request 'Talk Time'. This has enabled pupils and parents' anxieties about the pandemic and all the resulting mental health needs to be addressed.
- Family support workers know families exceptionally well and enable highly effective communication between parents and staff. School leaders target support to vulnerable families through the 'Time to Engage' project which supports parents to work with their children. Families are keen to be involved in this.
- Staff and pupils have been trained to use the 'Zones of Regulation' strategies to express their feelings. Pupils use these frequently to explain to staff and consistent approaches are used throughout the school to enable pupils to self-regulate.

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

...leaders continued to extend staff knowledge of trauma and attachment to further develop provision.

5. Area of Excellence

Systematic Vocabulary Development - leading to writing at greater depth.

Accredited

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

The school has a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language and over half eligible for pupil premium, so vocabulary development has always been a core element of teaching & learning. Staff have held onto this key principle throughout all curriculum developments and have continued to embed it into planning, teaching and monitoring cycles. Not only has this enabled teachers to hone their skills in teaching vocabulary, it has also developed a systematic approach throughout the school. By structuring the teaching of vocabulary and implementing timely procedures to revisit prior learning, teachers successfully build pupils' vocabulary whatever level they are working at. The rigorous monitoring processes are effective in assessing the impact of all the strategies and staff constantly reflect and review the approaches. School staff use a wide range of approaches in tandem. Many of these are commonly used by schools but the consistency, rigour and priority of teachers' delivery enables rapid results for pupils. Strategies used are:

- Word of the Day (shared with parents and Friday recap quiz)
- 'Pause words' (pupils indicate when they encounter an unknown word)
- One question to four; explanations repetitions or expansions, (the 'hand rule' used in EYFS & Year 1)
- Key vocabulary identified in all subject medium-term plans
- Key vocabulary shared at the start each lesson
- Key vocabulary included on displays and learning walls
- 'Colourful Semantics' and 'Talk for writing' methods in KS1 to support writing
- 'Speaking Frames' in KS2 to support writing
- Pre-teach sessions to support vocabulary development of prior low attainers
- Speaking and listening targets set

- Explicit teaching of the Reading Domains, with a specific focus on vocabulary and author choice.
- Careful selection of Reception and Key Stage 1 story time titles.
- Reciprocal Reading in Years 4-6
- Weekly 'Throwback' retrieval session
- Recap of previously related topic vocabulary at the start of each topic unit
- Focus on the use of vocabulary during subject leader pupil interviews and work scrutiny.

School staff have considered how they would support other schools in reviewing their vocabulary development by sharing,

- an oversight of the philosophy
- how vocabulary development is built into medium term planning
- practical examples of the strategy used to extend vocabulary
- practical examples of the strategies used to help pupils recall and build upon earlier learning
- how school staff involve parents in teaching of vocabulary
- how school staff monitor vocabulary development across the curriculum
- the impact this has had on pupil outcomes, especially in writing.

School leaders have already shared the system within the hub and received positive feedback particularly about the speaking frames in Key Stage 2.

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

The quality of the pupil's writing, notably the inclusion of technical vocabulary, has been consistently praised during Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 moderation visits from the local authority. The results in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 writing have been consistently above national average, and in the top 20% of schools for greater depth since 2017. Likewise results at high score for Year 6 spelling and grammar were in the highest 20% of schools in both 2018 and 2019.

Termly subject leader interviews with pupils and work scrutiny provides strong evidence of pupils developing and applying subject specific vocabulary.

During the review in all year groups pupils used the well modelled sentence starters and vocabulary to write well in a range of genres by the time they reached Year 6. Pupils understood and explained how they used vocabulary to affect the reader, particularly to create suspense in stories. They understood and used colour coding to review their own work against the success criteria and explained this in detail.

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

Esther Dias Patel, English leader. ediaspatel.211@lgflmail.org

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

School leaders value the membership of the local hub and all the opportunities that the QAR provides. They would value the opportunity to share practice beyond their locality.

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.