



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR WEST THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	West Thornton Primary School
Headteacher/Principal:	Rupinder Bansil
Hub:	Inspire Partnership Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Inspire Partnership

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	17/11/2021
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading (Virtual Leadership QA review)
Date of last QA Review	26/05/2021
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Inadequate (predecessor school)
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	05/02/2020



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Quality Assurance Review

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 Accredited

**Previously accredited valid Areas
of Excellence** N/A

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

West Thornton Primary School is a large five form entry school based over two sites some fifteen minutes apart, serving a diverse community in Croydon. The school officially became part of the Inspire Partnership in April 2020 when it closed and re-opened with a new DFE number.

West Thornton Primary School educates pupils from Reception to Year 6, working closely with partner schools in the Inspire Partnership as well as schools in the wider local community. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups (Other Asian, Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian) and for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are more than double the national average. A high proportion of pupils on roll, well above the national average, are in the disadvantaged group. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those with an education, health and care plan, are broadly below the national figures.

Leaders have continued to improve the school since the previous Challenge Partners Virtual Leadership Quality Assurance Review. This includes inducting and integrating a significant proportion of new staff, including three early career teachers (ECT), implementing a newly adapted curriculum and preparing to launch a new phonics programme mid-way through the first term of 2021/22.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- School leaders and the governing body work closely together to create joined up thinking, leading to a shared vision that all stakeholders can articulate. All staff have a solid understanding of their role in achieving the goals of the school development plan. This means that all staff work in unity to make rapid improvements. One visiting reviewer stated that he felt “empowered to observe such harmonious leadership where every leader was on the same page”.
- The headteacher drives this rapid improvement by regularly gaining and acting upon feedback from all stakeholders. She then skilfully deploys her staff to work with them in partnership, making use of the expertise within the trust. Staff, pupils and parents are all very keen to share their own positive experiences of this improvement.
- Leaders’ partnership working has ensured a quick recovery in provision. All national curriculum subjects are being taught. Some subjects are taught by specialists such as music, art, PE and Spanish. Extra-curricular clubs have now resumed and have also increased in range such as chess, origami and book club.

- Leaders have capitalised on their challenges. For example, many pupils benefit from working with unfamiliar people as a result of the challenge of two split sites. Similarly, all pupils benefit from skilled team teaching as a result of the challenge of open plan classrooms. Leaders and staff continue to use their innovative adaptations developed as a result of the Covid pandemic, such as holding Year 6 alumni events and having whole school assemblies on Zoom.
- Senior and middle leaders have worked collaboratively in and beyond the school to create a locally relevant and coherent curriculum which allows pupils to extend their cultural capital. Leadership of the curriculum is responsive to world challenges so that pupils are already developing into active citizens, such as pupils setting up community litter picking groups.
- Middle leaders feel supported by senior leaders. As a result, all leaders are proactive in leading, monitoring and evaluating practice. Middle leaders have a passion for their subject and are encouraged to celebrate its contribution within the whole curriculum. For example, the music teacher emphasises how music is the global language.
- ECTs and teachers new to the school feel very well supported by continuous professional development (CPD), such as joint planning time and regular meetings to see how processes work within school. The impact of recent CPD is clear on teacher planning and lesson delivery, such as the effective use of additional adults and support for pupils with additional needs to make progress.
- Staff here are happy and positive. They appreciate the collaborative ethos that enables them to learn together. Parents too are very positive. They feel that the school has an opening and welcoming ethos.
- Leaders have strengthened governance by providing training in fundamental British values. Governors are involved in the process of electing new pupil leadership posts. They are ensuring the process will teach an understanding of democracy to all pupils.

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

...there was a whole school initiative to share some of the successful teaching strategies that have been found to have had the most impact in increasing knowledge and retention for disadvantaged pupils. This will further build on the curriculum adaptations that have already improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- The school leaders have been relentless in ensuring attendance for all pupil groups is high. Clear identification of persistent absence and support for families is in place. As a result, persistent absence has vastly reduced.
- All adults use the school's behaviour ethos, Good To Be Green, across the school. Low-level disruption is not tolerated. Educational psychologists and learning mentors ensure pupils are able to self-regulate quickly. As a result, lessons and the day-to-day life of the school are calm.
- Pupils behave with consistently high levels of respect for each other and for adults. They play a highly positive role in creating a school environment in which respect, tolerance and diversity are celebrated and nurtured.
- Pupils are able to talk confidently about being a global citizen. One pupil said, "being a scientist or an inventor is important because then we can change the world." Other pupils talked about being ecologists or wanting to work hard in school so that they can find a cure for Covid-19.
- Pupils in Year 3 explained how quizzes and lessons on chronology acted as reference points to check their history learning. They identified Victorians in relation to their previous learning on Ancient Egyptians.
- Teachers regularly refer back to prior learning across the curriculum. This means that pupils can use it to improve. One pupil said, "In art I can look back at my book at the different shading techniques. It helps to remind me of how to do it and my sketches look better."
- The use of 'depth prompts' to extend learning are prominent across the school and across the curriculum. Pupils use the depth prompts both independently and collaboratively with their peers in order to coach one another, prompting oracy and deeper thinking skills. Work in books and outcomes displayed from across all subjects is of high quality.
- Classrooms are vocabulary rich. Pupils use their new vocabulary when reflecting on their learning. For example, pupils in the Reception class pointed to where they could see the knowledge. "There is Earth, Jupiter and Mars. We live on Earth. Did you know humans put robots on Mars?" They then linked it to their picture of an alien.
- Pupils are excited to read. They say they regularly read at home. A range of carefully chosen high quality texts are powerful because teachers weave in the knowledge for global citizenship. Pupils were extremely passionate but insightful about Cop26 saying that "it didn't really make a difference did it?"
- Pupils talk about the character skills shown in their texts, as well as those shown by historical figures saying, "Yesterday we worked as a team, that's one of our values." Subject leaders have also planned writing sequences around these new

texts. This means that pupils have several opportunities to practise and embed their knowledge.

- The Inspire Partnership Trust has successfully planned the mathematics curriculum to allow pupils to master mathematical concepts and take small steps to success. Teachers skilfully use these steps to meet all pupil needs. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson on finding the difference using number lines. All pupils were able to apply this concept to make subtractions.
- Mathematics books provide evidence of the clear progression from concrete to pictorial to abstract. "Number lines are really helping me. Our teacher always makes sure we have resources to help us, like cubes, number squares and number lines."

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

...leaders celebrated the innovative team teaching by exemplifying and codifying this into a guidance document that shares the West Thornton way.

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

- Leaders have strategically placed resources where they are most needed, such as family support officers. Vulnerable pupils and their families are exceptionally well supported and at the heart of the community. Attendance to school has increased dramatically.
- Parents talk warmly about how they are supported by all staff to help their children. For example, parents received an online support session to help their children access Bug Club, the online reading platform. Another parent received a personal phone call reminder to collect their food package. It is this personalised support that is building positive and productive relationships between home and school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) have received new training in how to use a range of bespoke techniques. These help pupils to access the curriculum at their level, such as the use of colourful semantics or the use of Widget Online symbols. In the Reception class, TAs questioned pupils in small groups to develop language.
- Teachers have taught pupils to self-regulate using zones of regulation. Consequently, the number of behaviour incidents has dropped, particularly for the highest need pupils. For example, one pupil seen using the school's zones of regulation was not even in school six months ago.

- Leaders identify activities and clubs that target particular pupils. For example, outdoor activities for pupils without home access to open spaces. Pupils are then encouraged and supported to attend. As a result, attendance and participation at clubs has increased. One parent said, "I was welcomed into the nurture breakfast club so I could understand what it was and support my child further at home." Another parent commented on how these clubs support her child to talk about her feelings and develop social skills. Another pupil was able to attend a school trip in September when previously this was not thought possible.

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

...middle leaders were able to quickly articulate the impact of how they have adapted their practice to support pupils to access learning, as well as to provide concrete examples of this.

5. Area of Excellence

Pupil Voice: Speaking up and speaking out!

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 pupils at West Thornton are passionate and happy. They feel their voice is heard in the classroom and outside of the classroom and at many points throughout the day. They were so excited to share the many vehicles they have used to share their voice, as well as the impact they have had.

One visiting reviewer summarised "I have been blown away by the pupil-initiated activities throughout the school."

Pupil leadership is evidently strong when visiting the school. It is embedded throughout the school as part of daily activity for all pupils. Class ambassadors confidently explain the current learning when any visitors walk into their classroom. Pupils are seen coaching peers in lessons. Play leaders monitor how to improve break and lunchtimes.

Leaders say that considering pupil voice during lessons is critical to their teaching strategies, such as reasoning, peer review and coaching each other. In fact, pupils are so confident in using different learning strategies that they help teachers to remember to use them in their teaching. Pupils were seen to engage with excellent models of live learning, such as using pupils as a silent teacher.

Leaders have extended their collaborative approach to pupils. The Junior Leadership Team (JLT) are involved in monitoring books and standards. Other pupils have recently had the opportunity to apply for new leadership roles including librarians, digital leaders, peer mentors, language ambassadors and The West Thornton Gardeners.

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

Pupils are extremely well prepared for their next steps. They are more articulate as a result of the strong emphasis on oracy. Pupils are also confident in how to use their voice to secure improvements for themselves and for others. The whole of Year 4 organised themselves into a silent protest. This resulted in a whole school priority in the school development plan to develop a whole school approach to environmental sustainability.

Pupils have opportunities to undertake learning walks and to compare continuity and quality across the school's two sites. This gives them experience in quality assuring standards and giving feedback for improvement.

Many pupils have moved on to proactively leading interventions to help their peers or the wider community. For example, one pupil has set up a writing intervention for his class as a result of taking part in a learning walk about presentation. Another has set up a community litter picking group.

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

Name: Jonathan Owen

Title: Associate Headteacher

Email: jowen@westthornton.croydon.sch.uk



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

Leaders would like the opportunity to work collaboratively with any other schools that have open plan learning.

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.

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.