



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR PRIMROSE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	Primrose Hill Primary School
Headteacher/Principal:	Philip Allman
Hub:	Camden
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	N/A

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	29/11/21
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading
Date of last QA Review	27/01/2020
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	04/06/2009

1. Context and character of the school

Primrose Hill Primary School is a two-form entry primary school, housed in an impressive, listed Victorian building in the borough of Camden. The school has an on-site nursery including provision for two-year olds. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) classes and the Year 1 classes each have an outdoor classroom. There is also an on-site autism resourced provision (ARP).

Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups and 60% of pupils speak English as an additional language, with 40 different languages spoken. The proportions of pupils who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and who have an education, health and care plan are all above the national average.

The school has supported other local schools over several years by leading training and support in mathematics, phonics and SEND. Several leaders are undertaking national leadership qualifications. Primrose Hill leaders and staff work closely with the Camden Hub, alongside the Camden Learning Hub network, giving and receiving valuable continuing professional development (CPD).

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The caring and insightful headteacher, ably supported by the experienced senior leadership team (SLT) talks of 'an evolutionary not a revolutionary approach' at Primrose Hill, 'so we are all moving in the same direction.' In his short time in post, he has secured a judicious view of the school. Leaders' pride and passion for their work shines through. There are high expectations of individual pupils in this inclusive school where the vision is to develop citizens who are truly life-long learners.
- Relationships are positive at all levels. Primrose Hill is a Growth Mindset school where making mistakes is seen as an opportunity to learn, explained by the headteacher as 'the outcome not being the most important part of the journey.' Senior leaders spoke of encouraging teachers to adapt their strategies to provide whatever is best for the pupils. Freedom for staff to 'take the right risks in the right way at the right time' ensures an ambitious curriculum that fosters intrigue and deepens learning.

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- Senior leaders have developed a wider leadership team so that curriculum leaders and phase leaders can be actively involved. This crossover of each other's work facilitates autonomy and results in strong leadership at all levels.
- Middle leaders care deeply about the impact of their work. They enthusiastically use community and business links to raise aspirations. The community is an integral part of school life. The partnership between home and school is strong through excellent communication, workshops and stay and play sessions.
- Teachers 'plan for curiosity.' The integrated topic approach insists that learning is contextual and meaningful, building on subject-specific skills and knowledge. Subject leaders cited the floor books, learning journeys, key vocabulary and progression maps as valuable resources to help pupils retain their learning. Phase leaders feel trusted to make decisions independently.
- Leaders are narrowing gaps by addressing 'the tapering effect' caused by the pandemic. Extra teachers enable planning to be closely matched to individual abilities.
- There are many examples of how CPD empowers staff at all levels and guarantees secure subject knowledge. This enables pupils to make good progress in lessons and over time. The recent senior mental health training ensures that well-being and mental health of all stakeholders remains at the heart of the school's work. Teaching assistants (TAs) benefit from weekly training such as phonics and supporting pupils with complex needs.
- Cultural capital is inherent within the school's vision. The family support worker gives bespoke guidance to vulnerable families. The city is used to full advantage through linking learning with the zoo, museums etc. Enrichment activities are varied and exciting, providing different avenues to succeed. One example is a national photography competition which was won by a pupil who had high level needs.
- Pupils have opportunities to lead through a variety of roles. Their training includes a distinct focus on the development of personal qualities. Pupils are a credit to the school. They are courteous, articulate and respectful. The school council publicity officer sent out plans for anti-bullying week. Councillors explained the impact of this as 'helping children to understand what bullying actually is and why it is wrong.' The friendship squad cited 'kindness and respect for others' as some of the qualities their role is developing. 'If someone is down, we help to turn the frown upside down!' They have ambitious aspirations for the future, sharing career ideas such as architect, journalist, doctor, philosopher, author and conservationist. Pupils appreciate clubs such as girls' football and trampolining.

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

...leaders' evaluation of the curriculum included Pupil Voice.

...middle leaders exhibited the impact of their actions with the same clarity and confidence as they articulate their actions.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Primrose Hill has a reputation for being a high achieving school where pupils make excellent progress by the time they leave. This is as a result of the inclusive culture, consistently high-quality teaching and the contextual curriculum.
- Floor books confirm the high levels of creativity and progression that exemplify the well sequenced structure across the whole curriculum. For example, the art/geography books illustrated how Year 2 pupils' cross-curricular learning had progressed from drawing London landmarks in pencil to learning the names of the landmarks through creating a journey. Pupils then used watercolours to paint the landmarks. They included time adverbials and used a compass to create a route for their visit to Street Art.
- The EYFS staff prioritise early reading from the start. They bring stories to life through the activities set up for continuous provision around the classrooms. In Nursery, activities such as using blocks to build a bridge were linked to The Gingerbread Man story. In Reception, children enjoyed learning the 'w' sound through a range of appealing strategies, including puppets, technology, actions, modelling, singing and team teaching. This enabled them to have fun and make good progress. Routines are well established, so children know what is expected of them and behave well.
- The purposeful, calm climate for learning gives pupils confidence to make mistakes and have a go. The soft start before school promotes a productive tone for the day. Pupils have a thirst for learning that is evident across the school. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils are reinforced by language such as 'let's use our mighty brains!' As a result, pupils are motivated to achieve. In a Year 1 lesson one pupil wrote, 'I am happy because I am at school'.

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- Because high level, subject-specific vocabulary is so well modelled by adults, it is used by pupils. Thus Year 6 pupils' knowledge of metacognition strategies enabled them to identify the different types of comprehension.
- Very positive behaviours for learning show that pupils are eager to learn and to support each other. There is a well-established mutually respectful culture. Appealing tasks ignite pupils' curiosity so that a purposeful and dynamic buzz of happy chatter can be heard around the school.
- TAs use their secure knowledge and skills to support pupils of all abilities. For example, the Year 6 TA spoke of the importance of 'knowing the curriculum' and 'knowing each pupil' where the impact of her training enables her to teach all groups through a carousel system. This also allows the teacher to have first-hand information about the progress of all ability groups. The TA said, 'The headteacher's door is always open.'
- Collaborative strategies such as talk partners and strong questioning deepen learning. In a Year 4 history lesson where pupils eagerly shared their knowledge of Roman invasions, one pupil said to her classmate, 'Just to add to your idea, I think
- A purposeful 'reading for pleasure' culture is embedded where pupils self-select books to match their interests and ambitions. For example, a Year 3 pupil chose a text called 'Future Worlds' because 'I want to be an engineer.'
- The carefully planned range of resources are well matched to pupils' needs and interests. The mathematics mastery approach embedded through the school is resulting in pupils' ability to reason and explain their thinking, which is evident in pupils' books. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are very enthusiastic, saying that 'the extended column method is so exciting!' and 'maths is great fun!'

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

- ... through sharing existing best practice, all additional adults consistently used the most successful strategies to enhance learning in whole class teaching.
- ... the planning, organisation and use of resources across EYFS and Key Stage 1 outdoor classrooms consistently matched the high quality of the indoor provision.

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

- There is no distinction between the expectations and provision for the groups of disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND and others. In fact, such is the inclusive nature of lessons, it is difficult to identify who these pupils are. Identification happens early and meticulous tracking and monitoring processes enable strong progress. The school's inclusion leader ensures that well-being plans incorporate all elements of being a trauma-informed school.
- Pupils' books demonstrate strong stamina for writing, excellent coverage and keen attitudes to learning. Pupils' progress in reasoning and applying mathematical understanding is evident by their working out and problem-solving skills.
- The school's nurture group enables a bespoke curriculum that meets the needs of the disadvantaged group of pupils. The holistic approach results in personalising activities to motivate pupils to aim high. TAs have a close bond with pupils with complex needs. In Year R, a child with complex needs confidently demonstrated how to write, 'It is a spider's web' on the whiteboard to reinforce learning the 'w' sound. The ARP is a valuable resource.
- During the lockdown periods, the quality of remote learning was exceptionally strong. Google Classroom was already well established. This enabled staff to redefine their pedagogy to narrow any knowledge gaps. Remote learning INSETs increased staff knowledge, and drop-in Zoom sessions enabled pupils and parents to connect with staff when needed. Excellent communication, including online worry boxes, well-being lessons and whole school assemblies maintained a sense of belonging.
- Pupils who are in the bottom 20% in reading participate in interventions that are linked to their class topic, making them feel fully included. Linked interventions include topic-based vocabulary to support the development of oracy in context.
- Maximising the location of the school enables staff to tap into what the local community has to offer, for example, London Zoo forms an important part of learning. Pupils have access to experiences that they may otherwise miss, such as visiting museums and travelling on the tube and train. There is a wide range of enrichment activities, such as residential visits, tutoring, therapy, PE, music, art and drama.

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

The EBI related to outdoor classrooms applies equally to disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

5. Area of Excellence

None submitted.

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

Leaders would like to visit Uxendon Manor Primary School to learn from their recently accredited area of excellence, the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Leaders and reviewers arrange their own networking and sharing of best practice activities.

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.