



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR FOREST ACADEMY

Name of School:	Forest Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Swabra Lloyd
Hub:	Inspire Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Inspire Partnership Academy Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	08/06/2022
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Effective
Date of last QA Review	07/07/2021
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	08/02/2022



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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 Effective

Quality of provision and outcomes Effective

AND

**Quality of provision and
outcomes for disadvantaged
pupils and pupils with additional
needs**

Area of excellence Not submitted for this review

**Previously accredited valid areas
of excellence** N/A

Overall peer evaluation estimate Effective

***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

Forest Academy is a slightly smaller than average primary school, with just over 200 pupils, situated in an area of very high social deprivation in Croydon. Decreasing numbers over time have led to the school becoming one-form entry, although there are two classes in Year 6. There is an independent Nursery on the school site and a large proportion of those children join the school in Reception. There is also a separate specialist provision for up to 12 pupils with SEMH and/or challenging behaviour.

Highlighting the deprivation in the area, two-thirds of pupils are in the disadvantaged group. There is an above-average proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), many of whom are new arrivals to the country with little or no English. Almost half of the pupils fall into this category. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly average, as is the number of pupils with an education, health and care plan. Mobility is high, with significant numbers of pupils leaving or joining the school in-year.

The three schools that were formally in the Synaptic Trust are now all members of the Inspire Partnership Trust. This is sub-divided into the Greenwich, Croydon and Medway hubs. This organisation facilitates a great deal of collaboration and sharing of strong practice across all the Inspire schools.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The current headteacher has only been in post for a few weeks and her passion and ambition for the school are palpable. She benefits from an experienced and equally enthusiastic senior leadership team that fully aligns with her vision. Together they form a close-knit unit that is moving the school forwards at pace.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and links closely with the school development plan (SDP). The SDP is very concise and is clearly 'RAG-rated', which enables senior leaders to accurately monitor progress towards completing the identified school priorities. The close moderation of teaching and learning highlights areas of success whilst identifying next steps for continuing improvement.
- Middle leaders are equally passionate about their roles and how they fit into the whole school development. They are proactive and enjoy both the autonomy that they have as well as being accountable for leading their subjects. They have strong subject knowledge and this is communicated clearly through their schemes of work.
- Leaders have worked hard to increase parental engagement. The pupil and family support worker has changed perceptions and raised the aspirations of parents. This has increased trust in the school's staff and a plethora of activities, for

example, drop-in reading sessions, have successfully encouraged greater numbers into school.

- Joining the Inspire Partnership Academy Trust in April 2020 has been highly beneficial. There is a great deal of support and collaboration available, whether that is across the whole Trust or within the regional hubs. This has resulted in increased consistency in the adoption and application of policies, procedures and strategies. At the same time, Forest has the autonomy and flexibility to adapt these systems to ensure that they best fit the school and pupils in their own context.
- The introduction of the Global Curriculum into the early years foundation stage (EYFS) has widened the offer for the younger children. Introducing topics like human rights, integrity and sustainability at an early stage has enhanced the experiences and knowledge that children have acquired and has contributed effectively to the development of their character skills, which is a whole school initiative. This has also added to their oracy capabilities.
- The progression maps that teachers use ensure that across the curriculum, key skills are identified so that teachers will know exactly what pupils should have learned by the end of a theme in the foundation subjects. Each hub in the Trust has its own bespoke version of the Global Curriculum so that core texts and subject content are more relevant to pupils in each context. For example, the adoption of class texts such as *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, are used sensitively to add to pupils' knowledge of world issues.
- The Ready to Progress strategy has facilitated closer collaboration with the other two schools in the Croydon hub. As a result, all aspects of the strategy are embedded in teachers' planning and this has improved subjects such as mathematics significantly.

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

...teachers further developed and deepened pupils' subject knowledge and understanding through increased talk in the classroom.

...leaders capitalised on the school's best practice and further improved links with the wider community to raise the profile of the school.

...succession planning ensured that the high-quality leadership already in the school is maintained.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Teachers exhibit strong subject and pedagogical knowledge. They plan content that stimulates pupils' curiosity and adheres to the curriculum intent. This ensures that pupils' thirst for learning is well and truly slaked!
- There is an affirmative climate for learning across the school. This in turn

generates highly positive relationships between pupils and their teachers, built on mutual respect. Pupils' character skills become well developed because of this productive environment.

- Behaviour for learning is of the highest order in all classrooms. Pupils' engagement in their lessons is closely attributable to the exciting learning experiences their teachers provide. One pupil emphasised the quality of the teaching and learning by saying, 'We get a great education here.'
- In most lessons, the level of pitch and challenge is generally appropriate to suit the needs of all pupils. In some lessons visited, teachers actively encourage a culture of challenge. For example, in a Year 5 computing lesson, where pupils were reviewing games prior to producing their own, one pupil responded to a peer's answer stating, 'I want to challenge his answer.'
- Routines are well-embedded so that lessons progress seamlessly. In a Year 3 English lesson, pupils were 'hot-seating' to explore how characters in their class reader might feel and act out those emotions. Rapidly, all hands went up and pupils' full attention was back on the teacher.
- In many lessons, questioning appropriately challenges pupils' thought processes and further develops their knowledge. In a Reception class, during a phonics session, the teacher used questioning to establish cross-curricular links, enabling children to gain a deeper understanding of subject-specific vocabulary.
- Links to prior learning are commonplace, enabling pupils to reinforce learning from previous lessons and, even, past years. This was highlighted in a Year 6 English class when a pupil made a connection with previous learning about World War I and World War II, specifically 'no man's land'.
- Resources for learning are adeptly utilised to support and enhance learning. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, based on exploring 3D shapes, pupils' knowledge about perimeter and areas added to their understanding. Additionally, the use of manipulatives heightened their reasoning.
- Collaborative learning is a major strength. Pair discussion is a common feature in all classes and is made more impactful because teachers ensure that the timing of this sharing of learning is sharp.
- Learning in pupils' books reflects high standards of handwriting that are embedded across all year groups. Progress is clear and the sequencing of lessons is evident, highlighting that the curriculum intent is being successfully implemented.
- Learning support assistants (LSAs) fulfil a vital role in supporting pupils with vulnerabilities. They are a well-trained, knowledgeable group of staff that makes a real difference. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the one-to-one work of the LSA assigned to a pupil with SEND was valuable. Her concentrated guidance and encouragement challenged him effectively, resulting in notable progress.
- The school is vocabulary rich. A focus on developing pupils' written and oral skills was observed across the school. In a Year 3 English lesson, pupils visibly applied 'terrified' and other synonyms to describe how scared a character from the text was feeling. Similarly, a Year 6 boy accurately explained how a Syrian refugee

could be described as 'traumatised.'

- The school has adopted the Trust-wide Little Wandle phonics scheme this academic year. Whole Trust continuing professional development has resulted in significant improvement in children's phonics skills and early reading. As the EYFS leader indicated, 'We hear every child read three times a week', which has contributed to their improvement. Another leader added, 'As a school, it has been the best thing we have done.'

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

...teachers systematically ensured that the curriculum is appropriately modified to enable all pupils to reach their full potential.

...task design, including all forms of feedback, utilised learning time effectively, in order to lead to greater progress.

...teachers used all resources available to ensure that there was greater consistency in teaching in all lessons.

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

- Over half the pupils at the school are disadvantaged. To satisfy this situation, all strategies and interventions are applied to all pupils, ensuring that the school is welcoming and understanding so that they gain full access to the curriculum.
- The school is highly inclusive. All staff go to great lengths to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to learn and thrive. Interventions are bespoke to ensure that pupils are fully prepared and are able to be the best version of themselves as possible.
- Building positive relationships with parents has been prioritised. 'It is pivotal,' as the regional family support officer stated. Contact begins on the playground when parents bring their children to school, and parents know who they can reach out to any members of staff if there are any issues that need discussing. This speaks volumes about the positive culture within the school.
- LSAs provide support that is tailored exactly to the needs of each pupil they work with. This boosts those pupils' confidence, self-esteem and independence, leading to accelerated progress from their starting points. Pupils with SEND in the school attain well.
- Open dialogue between teachers and the knowledgeable SEND coordinator begins the trail of support if a pupil is identified to have barriers to learning. Additional support through the local authority, and with SEND leaders across the Trust if required, results in developing the right package of support for that pupil. The view that quality-first teaching is largely what these pupils require is prevalent, and peripheral interventions complete their learning experience.

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

None emerged on this review.

5. Area of Excellence

Not submitted for this review.

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

Leaders will explore the School Support Directory to consider areas they may wish to improve at Forest Academy.

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.