
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	The Courtyard AP Academy
School Address:	C/o Langford School Gilstead Road SW6 2LG
Hub School:	Woodfield

Telephone Number:	02073312622
Email address:	courtyardadmin@tbaporg.uk

Unique Reference Number:	100041062
Local Authority:	Hammersmith and Fulham
Type of School:	Alternative Provision Academy Converter
School Category:	Special
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Number on roll:	14
Executive Headteacher	Seamus Oates
Head of School	Janet Packer

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	Not previously inspected
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	29 th /30 th September – 1 st October 2014
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES

School Improvement Strategies: Outstanding

Achievement is: Outstanding

Quality of Teaching: Outstanding

Area of Excellent Practice:

Behaviour for Learning Confirmed

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that The Courtyard AP Academy appears to be firmly within the outstanding grade.

Information about the school

The Fulham Primary Pupil Referral Unit became part of the Tri borough Alternative Provision under the Commissioning and School Support Service in September 2012. The head of the primary intervention service was asked to manage The Courtyard at Langford which was the specialist unit for 8 children with a statement of special educational need. In April 2013 the two services amalgamated and became the Courtyard AP Academy and a member of the Tri borough Academy Trust (TBAP). The Courtyard AP Academy (CAPA) is at present the only standalone primary AP provision within the trust although an all age AP has recently joined.

The CAPA provides suitable off site provision for up to 16 learners who may not be able to attend mainstream schools. The school provides full and part time placements for Year 1 to Year 6 learners, eight of the placements are identified for learners with a statement of SEN indicating SEBD, eight places for learners who are either at risk of being permanently excluded or have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools. All learners have identified behavioural, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The great majority has a history of disruptive education in mainstream schools with frequent fixed term exclusions. Short term placements are usually part of an early intervention where the review from the targeted intervention carried out by the Primary Intervention Development Service identifies that the learner would benefit from a short term placement in the CAPA.

School Improvement Strategies

The mission of the Tri- borough Alternative Provision is that its provisions need to be responsive, flexible cross phase and of the highest quality. As the only stand alone primary AP Academy presently in the Trust, The Courtyard contributes significantly to achieving these aims and objectives by sharing its academic rationale and excellent practice.

The key objective of The Courtyard and the other AP Academies is to ensure that all learners develop a 'love of learning'. It was very clear from the review process that the staff at The Courtyard have very successfully been able to fulfil this aim through their flexible curriculum offer, their work with learners and their parents and the very positive relationships that exist between the whole school community. The drive to ensure that every child succeeds is well embedded in practice.

The school has made decisions for processes and ways of working under the umbrella of the TBAP trust as these are based on evidence based practice.

There is very clear evidence of distributed leadership and leadership at all levels from the way on which teachers put into practice the philosophy and aims of the school.

A culture where everyone is encouraged to be a reflective practitioner underpins the work of the school. Self evaluation is rigorous and ensures that all staff know what is needed to improve further and how they can contribute to the process.

Professional development has played a key role in securing school improvement. The leadership team is very skilled and experienced and has been able to coach and mentor staff successfully enabling them all to be resilient and successful.

In addition to training that is tailored to address the needs of the learners, for example solution focussed approaches, de-escalation techniques, advice on mental health and attachment issues, all staff have benefitted from being part of TBAP and being able to draw on the expertise and knowledge provided.

Performance management systems are robust and contribute well to the excellent teaching and outcomes for the pupils.

A key indicator of the success of the provision is the number of learners who are able to successfully reintegrate into mainstream education. Leaders are passionate about their belief that all children attending The Courtyard should benefit from a positive mainstream experience and strive to ensure that there is a rigorous and robust transition programme in place that is personalised to individuals. Although this is a major priority, there is a recognition now across the Trust that the actual outcomes achieved by learners are more important than where these outcomes are achieved.

It would be even better if....

.....the curriculum roles and responsibilities were more clearly defined.

....the leadership skills of all staff were developed well.

Pupil Achievement

Pupil achievement is outstanding and in some cases exceptional. This is because of the robust systems of detailed tracking and concise analysis of data.

There is a synergy between the strategic philosophy encompassing high expectations for all and carefully designed personalised pathways. This has been developed as a result of the relentless drive from leaders in focusing on zest for learning. Pupils engage with activities which are challenging and relevant, their behaviour and readiness to learn are excellent. They know their next steps and the assessment and marking policy is embedded with pupils being involved at all levels in how they can make the best possible progress.

Pupils make excellent progress regardless of their background and needs. The success of closing the gap at Courtyard AP Academy demonstrates best practice. Pupils leave having made exceptional progress in a relatively short space of time.

Assessment for learning, PiXL and Assessing Pupil Progress have been used skilfully as part of a holistic rationale. Leadership and management report to the Trust Board on progress in precise and accessible terms. Excellent progress of pupils was evident in lessons and in a work scrutiny.

Teachers and senior staff have an in depth understanding of assessment and how it works and clearly believe in the systems which have been implemented.

Baseline assessment is completed efficiently and with reference to information from previous schools, pupils arrive normally functioning below national expectations and are quickly supported into a purposeful, safe and stimulating environment with a focus on learning and achievement. The baseline assessment is robust and enables the school to demonstrate the rapid progress pupils are making.

It would be even better if....

... the excellent progress made by pupils eligible for free school meals, those with statements and looked after children was made even more evident in the documentation.

.....the impact of the therapeutic and psychological input for pupils with statements and learning difficulties was monitored even more closely.

.....pupils and parents contributed to the narratives for pupil's progress which provide evidence of the significantly positive impact the school is having on pupils' learning and lives.

.....the overall percentages of pupils' good and outstanding progress were made even more clear in the reports to the Trust Board (for example, using a bar chart).

Quality of Teaching

What went well.....

- Leaders have an unrelenting focus on learning and this has a significant impact on the quality of teaching throughout the provision, which the review team considered to be outstanding.
- As a result of the safe and secure learning environment and the positive relationships that exist, the learners are motivated and encouraged to see themselves as successful learners and the majority have made accelerated progress given their starting points.
- Excellent planning and preparation, knowing and building on the strengths and interests of individuals, flexibility and excellent relationships are supporting excellent provision. Pupils clearly enjoy participating in tasks, are confident, polite and extremely proud of their work and achievements.
- The way in which staff have been encouraged to reflect on their own behaviours and the impact that these have on motivating and engaging learners has also contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching over time.
- All staff are very skilled in the way in which they differentiate their questioning, allowing every pupil to develop their thinking and problem solving skills.

- Learners take pride in their work, which is well marked; constructive comments help the children to know what they need to do to improve their work.
- Learning support professionals are well trained and work in partnership with class teachers enabling learners to access and engage in their learning.

It would be even better if....

.....the skills of the learning professionals were further developed to ensure that questioning is always precise, phonic strategies are always used to support less confident readers and that their priority in the classroom is always to have every pupil engaged in learning activities.

Quality of Area of Excellent Practice

The Behaviour for Learning Framework is the foundation upon which the outstanding work observed during the Challenge Partner review has been built. The identification of this as an area of excellent practice is confirmed.

The conceptual rationale derives from research conducted by Simon Ellis and Janet Todd 'Behaviour for Learning' [2009 – Routledge ISBN 10: 1-84312-466-1].

The emphasis of the framework and the way in which it is consistently and relentlessly applied is on learning rather than on behaviour. Its impact has been seen both in terms of achievement and in lesson observations.

A baseline assessment is completed within the first two weeks of a pupil joining the school. Following the assessment, the individual pupil's learning needs are broken down into three areas – behaviour related to relationships with self; relationships with others; relationships with the curriculum. This allows a graphical analysis of the data to identify specific aspects of each area which act as targets in the classroom. Pupils have individual targets to work towards which are reviewed every six to eight weeks. Everyone at The Courtyard is aware of this framework and is committed to its success. This includes the pupils, their families, teachers and learning professionals.

Within a short space of time, pupils who arrive at the school display vastly improved learning behaviours and enjoy being in school and being successful learners. For example, as pupils begin to learn to read and engage fully with the curriculum they make rapid progress. This engagement is mirrored by improved relationships with others and themselves. In particular this was seen as a key strength in the areas of literacy, numeracy and SEAL.

As a consequence of having the Behaviour for Learning strategy as the foundation of the school's work pupils are settled, happy and make rapid progress.

Partnerships

Fundamental to the success of the learners at The Courtyard AP Academy has been the relationship that the school has managed to establish with parents. Many parents have had a very negative experience with schools and the staff have strived to provide a personalised package of support and have, as a result, created an ethos where there is mutual trust and respect.

Parents spoken to during the review could not praise the provision enough and spoke passionately about how staff had listened to and nurtured their child so that they were now more confident and engaged in learning. The school would like to further develop the support they are able to offer possibly through systematic family therapy approaches.

Through the primary intervention service, many successful links with primary mainstream schools have been formed and staff have been able to share many of their successful strategies to the benefit of learners across the borough.

The Courtyard AP Academy makes very effective use of a range of external agencies and organisations to support pupils' achievement and well-being and wish to continue to develop these partnerships further.

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.

