



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR KESTREL MEAD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Name of School:	Kestrel Mead Primary Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Zoe Simpson
Hub:	East Midlands South
School type:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	The Mead Educational Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	22/01/2020
Overall Estimate at last QA Review (if applicable)	N/A
Date of last QA Review (if applicable)	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	16/03/2017

1. Context and character of the school

Kestrel Mead Primary Academy is a larger than average primary school, set across two sites. In September 2019, the school joined The Mead Educational Trust (TMET).

There has been a significant amount of change in staffing during the last two years, with appointments of a new headteacher, business manager, deputy and inclusion leader. In addition to this, a new leadership structure has been implemented to reflect the school's improvement priorities and provide capacity to move the school forward.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average, although a number of local families do not claim pupil premium funding. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is significantly above the national average. The school's improving reputation has led to a recent growth of numbers. Due to improved identification of need, there is a rise of pupils recognised with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a specialised package around the Year 6 provision at present due to complex needs being presented by a group of pupils.

The school's ethos is underpinned by four character values: compassion, curiosity, resilience and respect. The motto that applies to all stakeholders is a driving desire to 'be the best I can be'. This, combined with the TMET vision of 'Together we make a positive difference', demonstrates the aspiration for excellence within the school.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The school is extremely well led. Recruitment of staff with skills to complement those of existing leaders has produced an enthusiastic and highly effective leadership team. The impact of this team has been developed through the use of focused coaching and continuing professional development (CPD).
- Senior leaders base the curriculum on the school's vision of 'looking far beyond academic qualifications'. Their aim is to encourage pupils by developing the teaching of character behaviours to ensure that they are ready to face the challenges of the next stage of their lives. A Year 6 pupil showed the impact of this work: 'Being at this school has allowed me to perform in front of others – I never thought I would do that!'
- Leaders are developing a broad, rich curriculum to provide opportunities for pupils to develop academically and personally. Through the use of interlinked learning opportunities, pupils are encouraged to consider big questions, such as the importance of hunger in the wider world. The creation of wider opportunities for all its pupils, such as trips and visitors, has begun recently through the 'Primary Futures Project' to engage local businesses in this aspect of its work.

- Middle leaders comment positively about their opportunities to serve as 'Curriculum Innovators', where they are encouraged to lead a focused area across the school. This initiative supports aspirational leaders' understanding of expectations and raises their confidence in their role.
- Leaders ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve through appropriate challenge, regular monitoring and well-organised, effective support. They are reflective practitioners who identify next steps for the school accurately and enthusiastically work with staff to address these. This is evident in their work to improve assessment throughout the school.
- Class teachers complete regular learning walks with a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) to identify best practice, in areas such as boys' achievement. These produce a positive ethos where all staff take ownership for school development. It also allows leaders to identify key strengths and to develop consistency further.
- Work with the Mead Educational Trust allows high quality professional development and sharing best practice. These opportunities continue to energise staff.
- Central to all aspects of the school's work is a focus on staff wellbeing. A number of initiatives have been introduced to reduce staff workload, such as the streamlining of formats for recording pupil progress.

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

...leaders embedded fully the newly implemented strong curriculum vision that has been created, ensuring that it is monitored effectively by Academy Councillors and that there is consistent practice in all lessons.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- The quality of teaching and learning has led to improving outcomes across the school. There is a three-year trend of rising standards at the end of Reception and Year 6. In-depth analysis of Key Stage 1 data has also seen improvements in the provision in this area, which has had a positive impact on data.
- Joint planning sessions between teaching and support staff is having a major impact on outcomes. These see all staff sharing learning intentions and teaching ideas. This produces strong consistency in both pedagogy and pupils' learning.
- Pupils are very proud of the role that the school has played in their learning and they appreciate when teachers plan activities closely matched to their interests. This was highlighted by a Year 4 pupil, who stated 'I feel I am learning well in school because my teacher makes sure that I learn things that I am interested in'.
- Teachers have established warm relationships with their pupils, who are very

responsive and remain engaged throughout lessons. The caring, nurturing ethos of the school ensures that pupils' wellbeing has a high profile and there are high levels of respect between all. It encourages pupils to take risks with their learning, as was demonstrated by one Year 6 pupil enthusiastically stating 'That's not zoomorphism, it's personalisation!', when discussing vocabulary in a shared text.

- Pupils enjoy the wide variety of tasks and complete them well. They are productive, for example, regularly producing high quality pieces of writing. Pupils are proud of their work. They usually complete tasks fully and take care in the way they present them. Inspirational displays of pupils' work in shared spaces are used to celebrate success and inspire others.
- The use of whiteboards and talk partners ensures that all pupils think, communicate and engage with the task.
- Questioning is a key strength. It targets, probes and appropriately tests pupils' knowledge. It works successfully because it is closely linked to teachers' strong subject knowledge and is replicated by support staff.
- Attitudes to learning are highly positive. Pupils are fully focused and highly engaged in lessons as a result of teachers' high expectations for challenge, behaviour and learning. This has been a whole school focus, which is reaping rewards. Teachers are aware of the importance of developing pupils' social skills in all aspects of their work. One member of staff commented, 'We fill up our children's learning cups when elements of cultural capital are missing because we know that they will need these skills and experiences in their later lives'.
- Books are well organised, with high levels of presentation across most year groups. The majority of pupils take great pride in their work and the consistency in teachers' marking, and their use of 'grow' and 'stretch' tasks, leads to pupils having a clear understanding of the next steps in their learning.

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

- ...all staff challenged expectations around those capable of achieving greater depth by building on the strong practice demonstrated in interleaving learning.
- ...leaders continued to prioritise the development of reading across the school through the refinement of assessment systems and the embedding of clear strategic planning for the next steps.

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

- Disadvantaged pupils perform well because the expectations placed upon them are equally high when compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. Pupil progress meetings focus on all pupils, with disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils receiving

closer monitoring to ensure that both their academic and pastoral needs are met precisely. School leaders have a clear vision for how enrichment opportunities can be used to develop key aspects of learning, such as confidence.

Consequently, they ensure that disadvantaged pupils are provided with regular opportunities to attend a range of extra curricular events. The positive impact of this was shown by a disadvantaged child in Year 4 describing his excitement at attending the 'Young Voices' musical event the previous evening.

- Leaders demonstrate a relentless focus on engaging the parents of disadvantaged pupils and regularly review their engagement in all aspects of school life. The 96% attendance for this group at parents evening is an indication of the success.
- All staff are committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND make at least expected progress from their individual starting points. All pupils with prior identified additional needs are reviewed as soon as they start school. Individual learning plans are then generated, which identify where staff can offer appropriate support. Regular learning walks focus on the quality of provision for these pupils, ensuring that the impact of any support is maximised.
- All staff are supported by the inclusion leader to increase their confidence in planning activities to support the needs of all learners. A particular strength is the provision provided for pupils with high learning needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

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

...all staff ensured that learning for children with SEND was appropriately scaffolded to ensure their success.

5. Area of Excellence

AoE title: Year 1 curriculum organisation

Accredited

Category: Curriculum

Sub Category: Curriculum coverage/ breadth

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

In response to pupils historically not building on their EYFS learning as they moved through school, leaders at Kestrel Mead Primary Academy have developed effective curriculum provision in Year 1. This incorporates regular opportunities for high quality continuous provision, in which all learners are challenged and supported. Within this are numerous learning opportunities that offer pupils the chance to access prime as well as specific areas of learning. In addition, there are always many opportunities for reading, writing and mathematics that pupils can access independently and apply across the curriculum. Because the provision is tailored to the pupils' needs, the environment enables quality interactions from skilled practitioners to move pupils' learning forward without it being overly adult led.

Kestrel Mead's Year 1 curriculum also incorporates a rigorous phonics strategy for giving pupils the best start in early reading. With a 'keep up, not catch up' philosophy, all pupils are supported and challenged; they receive daily interventions, when necessary, and parents are supported in understanding how phonics is taught and given resource packs. Reading is also supported by a holistic reading curriculum that teaches pupils new vocabulary, developing oracy skills rapidly and fostering a real love of reading. Because of the focus on the prime areas, pupils are able to develop their communication and language and PSED skills to enable them to work largely independently and access their learning at their own level.

The school has developed strength in this area through CPD and research and development groups led by the Key Stage 1 leader; this encourages all staff to become highly reflective. This work has created a sustained self-evaluative approach so that teachers and support staff are always seeking to improve their practice further.

School leaders have made a strong commitment to extending the best practice throughout the school. They have also worked with new leaders in Year 1 and enabled staff to observe their practice in order to cascade their learning and reflections.

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

Teachers' pedagogy has created an environment of high challenge and low threat, ensuring that all individuals can meet their potential. Year 1 outcomes have improved in all areas.

Pupils come into EYFS with low starting points; communication and language and PSED are particularly low. However, regular monitoring of Year 1 provision shows that adults are encouraging pupils to demonstrate curiosity and independence in order to move their

learning forward. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to use and apply their reasoning skills and develop appropriate vocabulary.

High quality provision ensures that pupils, including those with additional needs, are fully engaged in their learning. Groups of pupils regularly take opportunities to share previously learnt skills and knowledge. The standard of the work that they produce, particularly in the shared writing sessions, is very high.

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

Name: Lauren Bickley

Email: Lbickley@kestrel-TMET.uk

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

The school would like to see examples of best practice in the delivery of the wider curriculum.

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.