



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR KESTREL MEAD PRIMARY ACADEMY

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

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| Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review: | Leading |
| Date of this Review: | 17/06/2022 |
| Overall Estimate at last QA Review | Effective |
| Date of last QA Review | 01/2020 |
| Grade at last Ofsted inspection: | Good |
| Date of last Ofsted inspection: | 15/03/2017 |



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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 Developing

Previously accredited valid areas of excellence Not Applicable

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

Kestrel Mead Primary Academy is a larger than average primary school, set across two school sites. The school has experienced considerable growth because of new housing in the area. In-year mobility is above average but has stabilised now that the school is four form entry throughout.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is above the national average.

The school has been on a rapid improvement journey. Staff have high ambition for all pupils and work tirelessly to improve outcomes. The school's ethos is underpinned by four-character values, compassion, curiosity, resilience, and respect. This is reflected in the motto that all stakeholders value, "be the best I can be."

In September 2019 the school joined The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) and embraces the TMET vision of "together we make a positive difference." In 2022 Kestrel Mead opened a Special Needs Unit ((DSP) for pupils aged 4-7 years with ASD.

The school prides itself on the development of its rich curriculum and innovative learning opportunities. Leaders' strong drive for continuous improvement ensures they are well placed to offer the very best to pupils, families, and staff.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The principal has established a strong and cohesive leadership team which has demonstrated a shared passion for pupils' success and well-being. Leaders understand the context of the school and all staff share and pursue its vision and values.
- Leaders have responded imaginatively to the challenges presented by the pandemic over time and have worked with families and pupils to secure appropriate curricula and resources, including developing a recovery curriculum.
- Leaders are rightly proud of the development of their multi-layered 'Sticky Curriculum', which has been planned to embed knowledge and create connections with prior understanding, thereby making the learning stick. Subject champions have been given time and training to develop strategic plans and have conducted in-depth monitoring activities alongside senior leaders, with follow up coaching sessions. As a result, teachers are well supported by knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leaders.
- The enthusiastic leadership of reading has resulted in a strong reading culture, including a clear map of high quality and inclusive texts. Leaders actively seek

ideas and feedback from staff. This has resulted in a shared ownership and passion for developing pupils' reading skills and enjoyment.

- Senior leaders have made a significant commitment to coaching approaches within school. For example, instructional coaching has enabled all teachers, including those at the start of their career, to reflect and improve their practice. Senior leaders have had training through the 'power of coaching' model and other leaders have developed peer coaching strategies.
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) leaders, together with staff, have created a stimulating and well-planned environment for learning and, as a result, pupils are focused, active and engaged in learning. For example, the hatching of chicks created significant excitement and unique opportunities for learning.
- There is a strong focus on effective professional development for both teaching and support staff. A wide variety of training opportunities are provided to meet the needs and aspirations of all staff members, including Early Career Teachers, who spoke highly of the support and encouragement they have received. As a result, the school has built a skilled and ambitious workforce.
- Leaders ensure that the core values permeate all aspects of the school's work, as evidenced in the thoughtful and responsive curriculum they have developed. For example, the use of 'big questions' throughout the curriculum has allowed them to explore challenging concepts and prompt thinking in pupils as global citizens.
- Pupils in the Primary Leadership Team (PLT) take their responsibilities very seriously. They feel that they have a strong voice and that their actions make a difference, not only within school but also in their wider community. The PLT identified that resources were not inclusive enough so their actions resulted in improvements. For example, they bought dolls of different ethnic backgrounds and one pupil said, 'I can see me!'

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

...leaders were able to articulate the complex nature of the interwoven curriculum with complete clarity, showcasing and signposting impact.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- The 'Sticky Curriculum' supports pupils connecting with their learning, reflecting on their place and role in society. The framework celebrates diversity and well-being, with many displays around school illustrating how all are welcome at the school. Character development infuses the curriculum with a focus on developing the whole child as a citizen of the world.

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- Teachers are well supported by subject champions who know their subjects and areas of responsibility well. For example, the multi-layered mapping across the subject of geography includes the identification of big questions such as in Year 4, 'Why should we save the rainforests?' This is accompanied by key concept lists containing specific vocabulary and links to awe, wonder and reciprocity enrichment opportunities. For example, in Year 4 geography work on rivers, the effective questioning by teachers resulted in pupils using high level vocabulary in their explanations.
- The school has developed innovative approaches to capturing pupils' knowledge, understanding and reflections within a subject and wider topic by using memorable learning journals and working walls. For example, pupils in Year 5 valued the opportunity to showcase what they have learned in history about their Islam topic. They selected the ways to present information and referred to the working wall that had been built over time to check, verify and extend what they know. Consequently, their ownership and motivation were high.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent behaviours for learning. Pupils are polite, open and articulate. The use of praise was a feature of most lessons. This contributes to the calm and productive learning environment. Teachers have developed effective use of the online tool Seesaw to extend and capture pupils' learning. For example, in Year 1 pupils accessed Seesaw independently and recorded themselves in role as Guy Fawkes answering questions. Consequently, teachers had access and insight into pupils' learning through this medium.
- In the EYFS the planning of provocations within continuous provision provided rich opportunities for collaboration and curiosity. For example, the mud kitchen was resourced with coffee granules and jellybeans, this created excitement and high levels of talk amongst children with one child explaining that a spoon in a bowl had not disappeared but was "hiding under the muddy water."
- Across the school, teachers use clearly established and embedded lesson routines which allow pupils to transition across different lesson segments and maximise learning time. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils used the four-quadrant mathematics grids and, as a result, they were confident in approaching problem solving activities. One pupil said, "You have to explain your answer and support it."
- Cultural capital is inherent within the school's vision. The school has intentionally planned and layered a programme of enrichment activities. For example, in response to a Year 2 pupil saying she had only been as far as the hospital, this prompted a plan for a beach trip. Other activities included Year 5 pupils going to watch a county cricket game, meet the players and take part in a girls' cricket project.
- Teachers plan well sequenced English lessons and make appropriate adaptations so that pupils are highly motivated to write independently. Pupils have clear purposes for writing from being immersed in the book-led focus and this leads to high quality writing. For example, Year 4 pupils' emotive writing reflected empathy

with the experiences of a refugee child.

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

... teachers' knowledge and pedagogy of oracy and vocabulary was securely embedded into practice, so that pupils' language acquisition, exposure and confidence further supported their learning, and closed identified gaps.

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

- The school's pastoral offer is highly supportive of vulnerable families and enables them to overcome barriers and, as a result, pupils both achieve and thrive. Careful monitoring through the Team around the Family (TAF) allows for well-timed support being provided for pupils and families using both external and internal agencies as well as providing training courses for parents. Case studies show this has had a positive impact on keeping pupils in education.
- The school is proud of its thoughtful inclusive practice. The leader for SEND has carefully tracked and monitored progress and ensured that pupil passports are clear to all staff. Leaders have provided training in breaking down barriers and supporting pupils effectively within the classroom. The new DSP unit is well organised, pupils feel secure and happy and are working well at their level of achievement.
- Senior leaders facilitate planning, preparation and time for assessment so that year group colleagues can spend time with each other to collaborate, reflect and plan. This means that staff consider how well disadvantaged pupils engage with, and thrive in, the curriculum offer. Teachers know what the key 'sticky' knowledge is in each learning journey and use this to help consider changes in upcoming teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well in their learning through a variety of strategies. For example, in Year 5 mathematics lessons, the use of manipulatives, an adapted quadrant mat and visual resources meant that pupils were able to process learning in steps and this ensured greater understanding and consolidated learning.
- Clear identification of SEND barriers to learning has allowed teachers to make measurable adjustments to support pupils' learning. For example, a pupil with a physical disability was able to access all learning within the classroom and had attended all school trips.

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

... leaders created further opportunities for pupil voice for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils so that they have greater ownership of their personalised learning.

5. Area of Excellence

Kestrel Mead Sticky Curriculum

Developing

5.1 How is this area developing to be a strength? What actions is the school taking to grow expertise in this area?

The school has developed a personalised and multi-layered curriculum framework that embodies the ethos and vision of leaders to establish a curriculum that reflects the needs of the community. The knowledge rich curriculum is infused with character and moral development, developing the whole child as a citizen of the world. As a result, the pupils own their own learning and this addresses who they are. For example big and little questions support the application of knowledge and critical thinking skills. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills, supporting the school's stated method of interleaved learning. Pupils revisit and make links between their prior learning and new learning. Weekly rehearsal activities are designed to reignite knowledge from the big question and to allow time to retrieve and rehearse information, allowing it to be committed to long-term memory.

Enrichment activities have been planned across the Sticky Curriculum and include opportunities for awe, wonder and reciprocity which involve links with the local community and charities. The ethos of the curriculum is to raise aspirations of pupils and provide wider opportunities such as through Primary Futures.



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Pupil ownership of the curriculum is an important focus for the school. The pupils independently record their work on the App Seesaw and end their learning journey by gathering knowledge, skills and experiences to journal their learning. Pupils can use different art skills and have freedom to make their pages unique to showcase their learning. In addition, the working walls are developed over the topic and used to capture learning, key vocabulary, responses to moral questions and create a visual resource. Oracy has been a development area for the school, recognising the low language starting points of a number of pupils and concerns about girls' passive voice. The focus on oracy support pupils' confidence, discussions and presenting skills. The Sticky Curriculum provides opportunities to teach and rehearse oracy skills before asking pupils to present.

5.2 What are the next steps to work towards accredited status next year?

The school will continue to strengthen its curriculum offer with a particular focus on developing assessment.

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

Continued opportunities to access networks, training and CPD opportunities to share and learn about best practice.

Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, the main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities and CP will collate and analyse report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.



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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.