



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR OAKTREE SCHOOL

<b>Name of School:</b>	Oaktree School
<b>Headteacher/Principal:</b>	Russell Davey
<b>Hub:</b>	London AP and Special
<b>School phase:</b>	Special
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	N/A

<b>Overall, Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	23/11/2022
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review</b>	Effective
<b>Date of last QA Review</b>	09/02/2022
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	30/01/2018



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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 students  
and students with additional needs**

**Area of excellence** N/A

**Previously accredited valid areas of  
excellence**

**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**

Oaktree School is a special school for students with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) aged 7 to 19 who have a range of learning difficulties including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), specific learning difficulties (SLD) and autism. Students join the school at different points in their education. There are larger numbers admitted at secondary age. The school is situated in Cockfosters and caters for students from Enfield and other neighbouring local authorities. There are currently 136 students on roll with 51 staff overall. Just over half of students receive student premium funding, which is high. Two thirds of students are boys with 23% of the students from African and Caribbean heritage.

The school provides outreach to local schools for students with special educational needs in six classes in three mainstream schools and other special schools. It benefits from a range of multi-agency professionals and employs its own music therapist, occupational therapist and child psychotherapist to support the specific individual needs of identified students.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2020 and has organised the school curriculum into three learning journeys, all underpinned by the vision to prepare students well for adulthood. Students are grouped based on ability, age and/or cognitive stage. There are nine pathways on offer within the curriculum from Year 8 onwards as part of the preparation for adulthood curriculum, including sports coaching, art, a café and animal care.

### **2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well**

- Leaders' investment in a positive behaviour support (PBS) approach across the school has led to a calm and welcoming environment for students. Staff respond quickly to any incidents where students need extra support leading to effective de-escalation.
- Leaders' passion to underpin their approach to the preparation for adulthood curriculum has led to the development of learning journeys designed to support routes through to employment, independence and wider engagement within the community. One leader described their ethos as 'making lives bigger for our students'.
- Leaders understand that the school needs to evolve as the cohort changes and as such are willing to adapt the curriculum to meet individual needs. Tutoring and links with mainstream provision have been implemented to support the most able. All learners have on-going assessment with the opportunity to move group should their needs change, or they demonstrate a faster rate of progress.

- Community engagement is a strength of the school, which has been planned to support both academic and social development. Students have regular opportunities to go out of school to engage with the local community. This builds their confidence as well as their understanding of the world around them. There are a range of opportunities to support cultural capital, linked to the pathways, including eight students recently performing in the Jack and the Beanstalk professional play linked to the drama pathway.
- Leaders carefully appoint staff to ensure that they have an excellent balance of gender, age and diversity. Leaders are currently developing a wider leadership team to reflect the composition of the school population. This, alongside a programme of induction, including two early careers teachers, is supporting the development of new approaches across the curriculum.
- Leaders' drive to improve outcomes in reading has led to a change in programme for phonics this academic year. This is currently being embedded across the school with clear direction from the senior leader with responsibility for reading. Leaders are phasing in the different elements by providing weekly training to support implementation.
- Governors are well informed by senior leaders. They visit the school regularly to find out for themselves the work of school. This informs their knowledge and understanding of how the preparation for adulthood vision is being implemented. They have been involved in co-creating the vision and are well aware of where the school is on its developmental journey.
- Subject leaders understand the vision and direction of school improvement and are clear that the curriculum is preparing students for adulthood. The subject-specific long-term plans for the year keep the vision of the school in mind. Subject leaders aim to link lesson content to real-life experiences.

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

... subject leaders were developed to confidently articulate how their subject area links with the wider curriculum offer and the impact it has on student outcomes.

## **3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well**

- Excellent relationships in whole school lead to high levels of engagement across the curriculum. Students know where they are going next based on their prior learning. Trust is clearly evident in interactions between adults and students and is underpinned by an ethos of positive behaviour support. Students said they feel well supported and cared for. One student commented 'They care about the children's future'.

- Engagement in learning is underpinned by very strong teaching. Routines are well embedded from the start of the day, establishing a calm and purposeful environment for learning.
- Students' aspirations are catered for through the nine accredited pathways. Leaders are passionate about raising the bar for all young people. This in turn has led to high expectations and engagement in learning throughout the school day.
- The implementation of travel training has led to six sixth form students volunteering to run a café before school. The success of this initiative has also increased parental confidence and therefore take up of the travel training programme, including one student with a visual impairment.
- Following regular sessions of continuing professional development (CPD), most teachers support student learning well using visual support and augmentative communication. Leaders confirm that this has been an area of significant improvement.
- Features of strong teaching included well-planned lessons with a clear structure, well-differentiated learning objectives and opportunities for students to pursue independent learning. For example, a PSHE lesson explored the dangers of high-energy drinks, where students independently explored the content and understood the nutritional value and potential dangers.
- Learning is clearly sequenced. Students in drama could recall sessions with the Chickenshed Theatre and those studying in the food kitchen knew about vegetarianism. As students have grown in their knowledge and understanding their confidence has increased, meaning they are more willing to answer questions and actively participate in their own learning journey. Students make links across their learning, such as exploring shape in art and studying budgets in food technology. This helps to broaden their experiences.
- The tracking of progress is captured electronically, which has improved the ability of leaders and teachers to analyse students' work and supports planning. Alongside this, parents observe their children's achievements in a timely manner and provide feedback on activities they are carrying out at home. Parents have fed back that they are finding the short video clips particularly beneficial. This more holistic approach especially benefits students who struggle to record their work on paper.
- Reading is an important element of learning for staff and students, particularly at the start of the school day. Students show a love of reading and a willingness to engage using the new phonics programme. Books reflect the cultures and the interests of the students. This has led to improved take up, particularly for older students where reading has historically been a barrier to learning.
- 122 out of 136 students (90%) of all students achieved all their termly EHCP outcomes in the 2021/2022 academic year.
- Well-being is a key factor in students' progress; a strength of the school. There is a Mindfulness programme which is supporting the whole school, with a range of interventions and programmes in place to help students to overcome barriers to learning. These include the sensory circuit programme and therapeutic support.

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

- ... teachers consistently planned for differentiation across all parts of the lesson, so that it is embedded across all curriculum areas.
- ... staff implemented strategies to ensure that independence for learning is promoted in all curriculum areas.

### **4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged students and students with additional needs - What went well**

- Disadvantaged students benefit from a range of supportive interventions, including music therapy, occupational therapy and psychotherapy. The impact of this has been improved attendance, engagement in learning and greater progress.
- A qualified teacher has carried out targeted weekly interventions with disadvantaged students and any students not making expected progress. She had one-to-one teaching interventions with 79 students across the year and these students exceeded their targeted expectations in reading.
- The headteacher has instigated a 'catch up' and recovery programme with over 500 hours of one-to-one support literacy and numeracy support which has seen the progress made by disadvantaged students match or in some cases exceed non pupil premium students.
- One success story is of a student with low attendance, which increased by 50% as a result of a personalised learning package that put him in charge of the school's computing equipment.
- The inclusive culture of the school, where students are able to effectively support each other, has had a positive impact on their well-being and their confidence to engage in new and varied activities. This was seen in the café with a sixth form student mentoring younger students regarding the ordering of food, providing a good role model.

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

... leaders monitored the disadvantaged cohort to ensure that their attainment demonstrates rapid progress in phonics and reading to ensure that their outcomes are in line with their peers.

## **5. Area of Excellence**

N/A

## **Following the QA Review**

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, we encourage you to share the main findings with your hub/hub manager so that they can support your hub's activity planning. Challenge Partners will also collate and analyse report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.

For further support following your QA Review, 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 (SLP) 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. (<https://www.challengepartners.org/>)

Finally, following the QA Review, schools may find it useful to refer to research such as the EEF toolkit to help inform their approach to tackling the EBIs identified in the report (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>)



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