



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR MOSS VALLEY PRIMARY ACADEMY

Name of School:	Moss Valley Primary Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	David Nightingale
Hub:	North-West Hub
School phase:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	Kings Academy Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	06/11/2024
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Effective
Date of last QA Review	02/11/2022
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	The school has not yet been inspected since joining the Trust.
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	N/A



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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 Accredited

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.

Please note that Challenge Partners is a school improvement charity and not a statutory accountability body. The QA Review does not audit schools' safeguarding procedures, handling or behaviour policies, however, Lead Reviewers and visiting reviewers are expected to follow Challenge Partners' Safeguarding Policy and report any concerns.

1. Context and character of the school

Moss Valley Primary Academy is located in an area of high social deprivation in Irlam, Greater Manchester. The school is smaller than average and includes two specialist on-site provisions: The Orchard and The Acorn. The former is for pupils with autism while the Acorn supports pupils with global complex needs. Reflecting the socio-economic demographic, over two-thirds of pupils fall into the disadvantaged category, which is well above the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) by far exceeds the national figure, as does the large cohort of pupils with an education, health and care plan. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is also higher than average, although most pupils in the school are of White British heritage.

The school joined the Kings Academy Trust in June 2023, comprising one primary school, one special school and two alternative providers. An additional primary school is scheduled to join the Trust in the new year. Leaders have created a highly inclusive school where pupils receive every encouragement to reach their potential through the “Believe, Achieve, Succeed” mantra. A set of purposeful values, promoted by all staff, set high expectations for pupils to be Active and Hardworking, Resilient, Kind and Respectful, Independent and Prepared.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Leaders know their school exceptionally well. They are passionate about providing the best possible experiences for the pupils and drive improvement with determination and sensitivity. To achieve this, they go the extra mile. They self-evaluate accurately, and this links positively to the priorities on the school development plan. Senior leaders have used their experience to introduce newer teachers to leadership responsibilities through membership of an extended leadership team. This has empowered these members of staff and added to their contribution to the life of the school.
- Middle leaders execute their subject responsibilities well. They take advantage of every opportunity to develop their knowledge through continuing professional development (CPD), networking with colleagues in other schools and the with local authority. They are reflective in extending their practice on their career journey.

- The Trust has provided the support and resources to make the school successful. Senior leaders are praiseworthy of the benefits of joining the Trust. For example, the process of subject leaders working with outside sources has resulted in an improved curriculum offer at Moss Valley.
- The extensive CPD programme has upskilled staff, enabling them to lead their subject(s) confidently. Training is cascaded down to other staff and learning support assistants (LSAs) have also enrolled on training, for example in mathematics, so that their support for pupils in school is enhanced. Non-specialists have thus been able to develop their skills and knowledge. The deputy headteacher provides direct support for ECTs in the school which enhances their career development.
- Teachers have begun to use poetry to introduce topics in the foundation subjects. This exposes pupils to the key vocabulary for every unit. While this initiative is in its infancy, leaders believe that it will help pupils retain the key words and phrases, giving them context and greater understanding. Staff are already reporting that this has excited pupils and set the scene for extending their learning.
- The English curriculum has been enhanced through the introduction of the Ready, Steady, Write scheme so that lesson content aligns with pupils' phonic ability. The approaches this scheme brings are believed by leaders to be most appropriate for their setting. This has led to greater consistency in teaching and improved independence in pupils' writing.
- "We pride ourselves on the quality of engagement with parents' as one leader expressed. Contact and communication are widespread, nominally through the SeeSaw platform and messaging on the school's Facebook account. The home/school relationship is a major focus as soon as children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and staff exploit every opportunity to invite parents into school.

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

- ... subject leaders further embedded curriculum refinements to ensure that there was clarity in the pedagogical approach specific to each subject.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Teachers across the school exhibit strong subject knowledge. They plan exciting lessons that capture pupils' interest. This enables all pupils to fully access the curriculum. Lesson design is purposeful and ensures that learning objectives are relevant to the curriculum intent.
- Very positive relationships, built on mutual respect, abound in all classrooms including peer to peer relationships. Pupils love their teachers, and this culminates in a highly positive, secure learning environment. One pupil commented that they felt 'privileged' to come to this school.
- Classroom routines are fully embedded and consistently applied. These include the 'silent signal' to draw pupils' attention back to the teacher and time-phased pair talk which enables pupils to share their learning with their neighbour.
- Retrieval practice at the start of every lesson helps pupils to know and remember more. The methodology for this relates to learning from last lesson, last week, last term, last year. Teachers monitor this by holding pupils to account to explain their understanding.
- Positive attitudes to learning result in high levels of engagement. For example, in phonics lessons Reception children were on task and fully focused on their learning. Similarly in Year 6 English, pupils were enthused and wholly engaged by the content of their lesson.
- Questioning is generally strong in all classes and there is a variety of ways for pupils to respond. In EYFS, staff effectively adapted the questions matched to children's ability in order to assess and deepen their understanding.
- Book scrutiny provides clear evidence of adaptive teaching for different ability pupils. Presentation is strong and pupils clearly take great pride in their work. This is largely attributable to additional handwriting practice pupils undertake and the priority to teach correct pencil grip from an early age. Editing is frequent, enabling pupils to improve their work and they welcome the opportunity to respond to teachers' feedback.
- Philosophy4Children is thoroughly established, boosting pupils' oracy skills. This was observed in Year 5 and 6 English lessons where pupils commonly added to the discussion by respectfully stating, "Building on what 'X' has just said..."
- The whole school focus on literacy is very popular with pupils and they truly see the value in it. One pupil remarked, "We enjoy English lessons,

particularly story-writing. We also like reading because it helps us with our writing.”

- The previous QAR has resulted in significant improvements in the outdoor provision of the EYFS, particularly assisting with the development of physical skills. Staff and children have benefitted enormously because learning opportunities have been maximised.
- Cognitive load has been addressed through CPD so that teachers now have improved knowledge and understanding of how to support pupils in their class who have needs around autism. This has been met with significant success because pupils are fully engaged in learning, and the number of behavioural incidents has decreased. As the headteacher stated, ‘There is greater clarity in class.’ Neutral colours in classes help to create a calm learning environment.
- There is a very extensive extra-curricular offer across the school and all pupils are able to access the activities. The School Council has been replaced by a Pupil Parliament, enabling pupils to have a real voice in the school. There is a plethora of other leadership responsibilities, for example sports leaders, reading champions, ‘playground pals’ and eco leads. All of these roles play an important part in school life and pupils’ character development.

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

- ... pupils were given increased opportunities to articulate their learning, to include quality partner talk and active listening.
- ... teachers provided chances to debate issues in class, and additionally, expanded their responses.

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

- The majority of the pupils in the school fall into the additional needs category, many with double disadvantage as they may have SEND issues as well as coming from a disadvantaged background. To counter this, leaders ensure that their individual needs are clearly identified and supported.
- The main strategy that is having the greatest impact on disadvantaged pupils is the Place2Be intervention, for which there is a long waiting list. While this offer is for all, disadvantaged pupils receive priority access. The wraparound

care before and after school also makes a valid contribution. Concentration levels and participation in lessons have subsequently improved.

- Attainment for these pupils in EYFS and phonics is in line with or significantly above national expectations. Key Stage 2 data is close to the local authority and national standards. Compared to all pupils in school they are doing better in the combined statistic. This is because adaptive teaching is having increased impact. Staff awareness of these pupils in their class has improved so that seating arrangements, and interventions such as bespoke tutoring in phonics and later in English and mathematics are generating improvement.
- Senior leaders have taken the decision to provide a universal extra-curricular offer to all pupils so that every activity is free of charge. To encourage greater participation by disadvantaged pupils, they are frequently given first choice to attend which is greatly increasing participation of this group.
- The on-site specialist provisions – The Orchard and The Acorn – provide highly valuable support for pupils with severe needs. Such is the quality of care they receive, many return to mainstream education on a part- or full-time basis.
- Other pupils with SEND in the mainstream are rapidly identified and the necessary arrangements are swiftly put into place so that they receive the best possible support in the classroom. The information about these pupils is provided for teachers which enables them to adapt their teaching to best suit these pupils' needs. This ensures that they access the full curriculum offer. A clear example is seen in the adapted phonics lesson to support non-verbal pupils. This is having a positive impact because they are progressing well.
- LSAs perform an invaluable role across the school, leading interventions and providing excellent in-class support. The dedicated work they do on a daily basis impacts enormously on the success of the pupils they support.

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

- ... there was a continued focus on moving disadvantaged pupils towards age related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, with the aim of more of these pupils attaining the greater depth standard.

5. Area of Excellence

Early Literacy/Reading in EYFS

Accredited

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

The leader of the EYFS has worked exceptionally hard to drive this aspect. Her passion for improving the literacy skills and knowledge of the pupils is infectious! Many children arrive with speech and language difficulties thus, addressing early communication and language becomes a top priority in supporting their learning journey. The school is deeply committed to delivering a robust phonics programme through the Read Write Inc (RWI) scheme, which forms a cornerstone of the daily curriculum. Targeted one-to-one interventions are provided, based on half-termly assessments, for those pupils who require it so that staff are able to address individual developmental needs more precisely. Parental engagement is vital, and this is achieved by sending home books that align with each pupils' phonetic level, along with 'books to share' for family enjoyment. Parents are further supported through home learning phonics packs, meetings, and tailored guidance shared via SeeSaw.

The leader has created a range of activities, many of which are unique, to ensure that these strategies are purposeful and successful. The activities she has developed include extra-curricular workshops for parents/carers to enable them to better support their children with their reading. In addition, she has organised half-termly Bedtime Stories to encourage more effective story-time at home. These are held at the school and parents and pupils (in pyjamas!) enthusiastically attend. Orchard and Acorn pupils have their own event if they are unable to join the mainstream one. There has been a very positive uptake with over 60% of EYFS parents attending and this figure is increasing.

Story-scribing is another unique method used by teachers and LSAs which gives pupils the opportunity to be creative. Pupils recount their story to an adult who then writes it down as they speak it. Later versions enable pupils to fill in blanks with the words that fit, improving their writing skills. School funding matches the donations from the Dolly Parton Literacy Foundation so that all children in the EYFS receive a

book delivered to their home every month. Fun activities are also included, for example the leader organises a 'Masked Reader' competition, mimicking the television programme, which children love!

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

In 2023-24, 80% of all mainstream pupils met the standard in 'Word Reading' (LA: 72% NA: 76%) and 'Comprehension' (LA: 75% NA: 80%) which was clearly better than the local authority and national averages. Disadvantaged pupils performed well with 83% meeting the standard in 'Word Reading' (LA: 59% NA: 61%) and 'Comprehension' (LA: 67% NA: 68%). All pupils in the mainstream provision achieved the standard in 'Writing' (LA: 66% NA: 71%). Once again, disadvantaged pupils achieved highly (83%) met the standard in 'Writing' (LA: 52% NA: 55%) and 'Comprehension' (LA: 67% NA: 68%).

The school has already supported two local schools with phonics to ensure they have a robust scheme in place. As a result of the support and guidance from Moss Valley, the phonics scores in both of those schools are improving exponentially. Support for other practitioners through the Challenge Partners Residency Programme has also had a positive impact. Another reviewer who visited on the last QAR arranged to meet with the EYFS lead with a view to taking some of Moss Valley's initiatives back into their school. This indicates that the success of the strategies at this school are already bearing fruit in other settings and there is considerable scope for these initiatives to be distributed further afield.

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

Name:	Beth Jones
Title:	EYFS leader
Email address:	bjones@mossvalleyacademy.uk

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.



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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>)