

## Written Report

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### CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

<b>Name of School:</b>	<b>Woodfield School</b>
<b>School Address:</b>	Glenwood Avenue, London, NW9 7LY
<b>Hub School:</b>	Woodfield

<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 8205 1977
<b>Email address:</b>	dlp@woodfieldschool.co.uk

<b>Unique Reference Number:</b>	140769
<b>Local Authority:</b>	Brent
<b>Type of School:</b>	Special
<b>School Category:</b>	Academy Converter
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	11-19
<b>Number on roll:</b>	147
<b>Head teacher/Principal:</b>	Desi Lodge Patch

<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	8-9 November 2010
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	1 (Outstanding)

<b>Date of Quality Assurance Review:</b>	17-18 March 2015
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## **QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES**

<b>School Improvement Strategies:</b>	Good
<b>Achievement is:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Quality of Teaching:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Area of Excellent Practice:</b>	
<b>Sixth Form Provision</b>	Developing

### **Overall Review Evaluation**

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Woodfield School appears to be firmly within the Outstanding grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted report 8-9 November 2010.

## Information about the school

Since the previous Ofsted inspection the school has converted to academy status. It has also become a teaching school. The range of students' special educational needs has become more diverse and complex over time. The school educates students with statements of special educational needs for autistic spectrum conditions, moderate and severe learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech, language and communication needs. There has been a recent increase in the number of students on roll. Around two-thirds of the students are boys. A higher than average proportion of students is eligible for the pupil premium. Students come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Black African Caribbean. Over half speak English as an additional language.

## School Improvement Strategies

### What went well

- School leaders have responded well to the changing profile of students' needs by modifying some aspects of the school's organisation and curriculum. The introduction of both class-based and secondary models of teaching ensures that students with different kinds of learning difficulties are appropriately supported. This has been especially important since the number of students with severe learning difficulties has increased.
- Recent changes to a previously long-standing and stable staff team have necessitated more robust monitoring of learning and teaching. Lesson observations have become more frequent and now involve more members of the leadership team. Additionally, senior leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching now draws on a wider base of information, including work scrutiny and students' achievement.
- There has been a concerted focus on improving the performance of staff across the school through the provision of appropriate training. This includes those new to the profession and those developing their good practice as well as prospective and appointed leaders. For example, teachers have participated in the outstanding teacher programme and national professional qualification for middle leaders.
- The school has developed common approaches to fostering positive behaviour. As a result, students' behaviour in lessons is often excellent; they are mutually supportive, cooperative and focused upon their work.
- Middle leaders are having a marked impact upon whole school improvement particularly in the promotion of British values.

### Even better if...

- ...monitoring ensured that lesson planning and delivery was consistently based on clear objectives and differentiated learning outcomes matched to students' abilities.

- ...the school improvement plan more accurately reflected the development needs identified through monitoring the quality of learning and teaching.
- ...the school's approach to positive handling was documented to clearly show how it complies with accepted good practice and checked to ensure it would stand up to robust legal scrutiny.

## **Pupil Achievement**

The attainment of students on entry to the school and at the end of each key stage is well below age related expectations due to the nature of students' special educational needs.

Students' learning and progress is assessed against the school's own system of levels known as 'Woodfield Steps'. These steps provide a framework for target setting and support teachers to judge whether students are making expected progress. The school reports that these steps have also supported students and their families to better understand their targets and how they will make the next steps in their learning. The school uses this system throughout all key stages, although it is currently used more effectively in Key Stages 3 and 4 than in the Sixth Form. The school would benefit from more clearly defining its limits for judging both expected progress and more than expected progress within this system.

There has been a trend of improvement in reducing the proportion of students making only lower quartile progress in recent years, particularly from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. The proportion making upper quartile progress in science has improved well over time in Key Stage 3. However, upper quartile progress, especially in English through Key Stages 3 and 4 has not risen since the proportion of students with severe learning difficulties has increased. School leaders had identified this trend and training has been provided to improve the teaching of literacy across the curriculum.

The school's monitoring demonstrates that there is now little difference in the achievement of identified groups of students compared to their peers. Gaps in performance have mainly been successfully closed over time. As a result, all students now achieve accredited awards at Entry Level 2 or above in mathematics and English. Any remaining gaps are attributed to the circumstances of individual students rather than being indicative of more general issues.

Students in the sixth form have increased access to a range of accredited courses at entry level including mathematics and English. ASDAN and a wide range of vocational educational opportunities are provided to help to develop employability skills. Alternative college pathways have also been identified to best support students further into their future.

The school recognises that it would benefit from producing summaries that clearly identify where there is exceptional student progress. These would further support school leaders' judgements about the impact of teaching on students' learning and development.

## Quality of teaching

Just under half of the school's teachers were observed during the review. School leaders included some who had not been seen recently as part of their routine Wednesday learning walks. No NQTs were observed.

### What went well

- Staff create safe and positive learning environments by being calm and consistent in their approach. Consequently, students feel confident, share their ideas and ask for help when they need it. Excellent interaction and communication between staff and students ensures that students' behaviour across the school is positive and respectful.
- Teachers plan and structure learning well. Routines and systems are well established so that lessons begin promptly. Learning is well paced so that students are actively engaged from the beginning of lessons. Both teachers and teaching assistants challenge students well and give them strong encouragement to persevere and move on in their learning.
- Staff prepare students well for their involvement in lessons, ensuring all have an equal opportunity to participate. Some teachers have very strong skills in personalising systems and structures for individual students although this is not consistent across the school. In some lessons, teachers facilitate collaboration between students very well. Students often take responsibility for helping to teach others.
- Teachers provide appropriate support for developing students' vocabulary and improving their reading skills. For example, key words associated with the task are often displayed with learning objectives so that students can refer to them.
- Resources and stimulus materials are of a high standard. They support students to work independently and are well organised to ensure that learning time is not wasted. They help to ensure that learning is purposeful and relevant to skills and knowledge they will need as they grow older.
- Staff use questioning well to recap on prior learning, to assess and check the understanding of concepts being taught and extend students' learning. Students are given the appropriate time needed for processing questions and all responses are managed positively. This promotes self-correction and makes learning meaningful.
- A variety of effective systems are used across the school to enable students to evaluate their own learning and that of their peers. Students show a clear understanding of how to use these systems, as well as demonstrating a genuine desire to respond positively and constructively when evaluating peers work.

### Even better if...

- ...teachers consistently ensured that learning activities were effectively differentiated so that they extended and challenge learning by always being well matched to individual students' needs.

- ...teachers were encouraged to plan lessons which differentiated learning and promoted students' independence from the outset.
- ...teachers had a consistently strong understanding of how to set and communicate sharply focused, high quality learning objectives in student friendly language that were realistically achievable in the time available.

## **Quality of Area of Excellent Practice**

### Sixth Form Provision – submitted for review as an area of developing practice

There has been significant recent improvement to provision for sixth form students. Data systems are now functional and leaders are beginning to track students' progress over time and make comparisons with previous cohorts. Leaders recognise that identifying and responding to emerging trends is an important aspect of the next stage of development.

Provision for students is tailored effectively. They are helped to choose the most suitable learning pathway. All staff routinely ensure that students are fully involved in every aspect of learning, including target setting and evaluation of their achievement.

There are consistent and structured routines in place for students, creating a calm and safe environment for learning. Students are empowered to seek and accept roles and responsibilities within the school, which has had an extremely positive impact on the development of life skills. Examples of this include the sixth form committee group which gives students a voice on how the sixth form will operate, and the development of a vocational bicycle maintenance course which encourages students to learn new skills but also see how they can assist others by using those skills.

The leadership team has put in place a programme of professional development for their staff so that they are able to meet the needs of students. They are also in the process of developing further links with the local community to secure off site learning opportunities and work experience, so that the foundations for life beyond school are put in place.

## **Partnerships**

Through the work of the teaching school, leaders have established strong links with local schools, colleges and universities. The work of the teaching school focuses predominately on developing SEN practice in order to increase opportunities for inclusion. The school is developing projects which include students as researchers as well as creating opportunities for students with learning difficulties in the creative arts and encouraging schools to conduct their own research and improve their teaching.

Feedback from participants of training courses and programmes are collected which enable the teaching school to tailor their provision to the needs of other settings and demonstrate

that their training has had an impact on wider practice. The headteacher is also proactive in establishing links that support the work of the school, such as through the London Leadership Strategy and Brent Schools Partnership. Networks between special school heads enable all Brent schools to share good practice.

**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.**

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

- Potential visits to other special sixth forms to help see how good practice has developed.
- Should Challenge Partners consider focused reviews or look at areas of developing rather than excellent practice?