



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR

HORNCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL

<b>Name of School:</b>	Hornchurch High School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Serena Madhvani
<b>Hub:</b>	East London
<b>School phase:</b>	Secondary
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	Partnership Learning Academy Trust

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	27/11/2023
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review</b>	This is the school's first Challenge Partners Review
<b>Date of last QA Review</b>	N/A
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	22/01/2019



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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** Professional development – forms, mechanisms and sequencing  
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.***

**1. Context and character of the school**

Hornchurch High School is an 11-16 academy located in Havering, Essex. The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and is a member of the Partnership Learning Academy Trust. The headteacher, along with some members of the senior leadership team, has been in post since February 2023.

Leaders are passionate about supporting the children and young people of today to effectively manage their lives and their wellbeing, to help and support others and to become future, responsible custodians of a healthy and sustainable world. The school's ethos and values are based on 'We aspire to be the best that we can be, we believe in ourselves and others, we achieve our goals and strive for the next'. The school's motto is 'Excellence for All'.

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The school's student population is mainly White British although the numbers of students from different ethnic minority groups is increasing. The proportion of students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is above the national average as is the proportion of disadvantaged students. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly in line with the national average.

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

- The headteacher is a gifted leader who is passionate about achieving the best for all students. Together with other senior leaders, she has transformed the culture of the school. The headteacher is supported well by the senior team, with a sharp focus on the core business of a successful school and sustainable improvement.
- Raising the aspirations of all students is a key ambition of leaders. Senior leaders communicate their conviction that anything is possible through the school's motto, 'Excellence for All'. They have created an environment where staff and students feel part of a collective team that is working to improve the school.
- Through rigorous quality assurance processes, senior leaders have identified the correct priorities for improvement. Out of necessity, the school improvement plan is extensive with time-linked success criteria. Bringing a level of consistency to whole-school practices and processes has been fundamental to improving the school. To this end, senior leaders have been successful.
- Senior leaders have made the decision to restructure the curriculum in Years 7 and 9 and the GCSE subjects offered to students in Years 10 and 11. Those GCSE subjects that were deemed to be less successful previously have been discontinued.
- Leaders are raising students' aspirations through sharply focused assemblies. In a Year 8 assembly, developing student resilience was identified as the main learning intention. The new tutor sessions have been co-planned with heads of year and staff, and are bringing a more consistent approach within year groups. The programme of assemblies, tutorials and lessons develops students' understanding of fundamental British values. Leaders work closely with organisations such as the Jack Petchey's Speak Out Challenge, the University of East London and the Brilliant Club to inspire students to aim high. This is supporting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is a sustained drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Leadership of this area is a strength and has ensured that teachers

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understand the importance of developing their own practice. The school's teaching and learning framework has been constructed using evidence-informed and wisdom-led practice. There is a shared language for teaching and learning across the school which is leading to a consistent approach to classroom practice.

- Many of the school's systems and structures have been overhauled and renewed. A new behaviour policy, based on the school's values, has been introduced and follows a model of the best practice found nationally. Students behave very well in class and around the school and understand why this is important.

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

- leaders and staff took time to consolidate and further embed strategies in preparation for the next stage of school improvement.
- senior leaders continued to develop middle leaders as transformational leaders in order for them to push on and drive the next stage of the school's improvement journey.
- leaders continued to build the capacity of the teaching and learning provision.

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

- Leaders have successfully created an atmosphere of trust between teachers and students. Students understand leaders' high expectations of behaviour. There is strict adherence to rewards and sanctions with a no-nonsense approach to how students will conduct themselves in and around the school.
- Classroom routines are well established and non-negotiable practices are adhered to in every lesson, by every teacher and by every student. Students are provided with the correct equipment needed to actively participate in learning activities, with students even having a say on the type of writing pen to be used.
- The daily line up and morning welcome at the start of the school day ensures consistently high standards in uniform and behaviour. A calm and purposeful walk to lessons settles students and puts them in the right frame of mind to engage in their learning. There are clear start and exit points to lessons, and all teachers greet and dismiss students at the door.
- Younger students study a three-year programme that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has moved to a banding system, with students in Years 7 to 9 having all their lessons within the same band. The system is flexible and dynamic and allows for student movement between bands and enlargement of the top band as progress is made over time.

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- For older students, the curriculum provides an academic pathway, combined with vocational options. A higher-than-average proportion of students study GCSE subjects which contribute to the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc). The proportion of disadvantaged students studying for the Ebacc is higher than that seen nationally.
- Students participate in the extensive Six Hits programme which provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. Students take advantage of various educational visits to broaden their cultural and social experiences. For example, students visit the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, Tate Modern and Sea Life, and are encouraged to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- In 2023, students achieved in line with or close to national benchmarks. These results represented the school's best progress score to date. The work in students' workbooks is well presented and illustrates the improvement in their academic progress.
- Teaching is characterised by clarity of instruction and an adherence to the school's teaching and learning framework. In the best lessons, learning intentions are effectively shared with the students and couched in terms of to know; to understand; and to be able to. In a Year 11 science class, the teacher employed a short sharp activity at the start of a lesson. This enabled students to retrieve prior learning related to chemical combustion and was successful in building the foundation for higher order thinking.
- The current whole-school focus on questioning is a strength and was evident across the school. The consistent use of 'no hands up', linked to the random selection of students, ensures students are focused on the teacher and thinking about their responses.
- In the best lessons, teachers use structured 'think, pair, share' to develop oracy and active listening. Consideration is given to key words and the development of the technical language of the subject.

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

- teachers planned carefully where the optimum challenge point is in order to enable higher attaining students to think hard and become independent and avid learners.
- leaders and staff prioritised the importance of reading throughout the school.

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- staff continued to accelerate the progress of students by continuing to provide high quality instruction and a quality intervention package.

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

- Leaders want all students, including disadvantaged students, to aspire to achieve their potential, irrespective of their demographic context. The school's strategy is directed at addressing barriers to learning while taking remedial action on areas which require attention. The key strands of the strategy are to ensure high-quality teaching and to provide a range of targeted interventions for those students who are identified through a system of tracking.
- Disadvantaged students engage in at least one hour of silent reading each week. Literacy lessons have been placed on the school curriculum for students in Years 7 to 10 during which students read and discuss what they have read together. Provisions include free revision guides in each subject and provision of an after-school homework club in a computer room for those who do not already have such access at home. Set English texts are purchased for disadvantaged students and the Duke of Edinburgh award is heavily subsidised for disadvantaged students to encourage participation. All students in Year 7 are provided with small group music tuition. Older students benefit from four days of after-school intervention per week.
- The SENDCo from another school within the Trust oversees the provision for SEND at Hornchurch High. The level of support from senior leaders has enabled the two new deputy SENCOs at Hornchurch High to receive invaluable training and support. This has helped to create a team who have identified key priorities and have a strategic plan for taking SEND forward.
- The new banding arrangements enable SEND students to access the curriculum. Tutors know the needs of their students. The new pastoral system together with the systems for tracking student progress, alert staff to when intervention strategies may be required.

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

- staff continued to accelerate rapidly the progress of disadvantaged students and for those students with SEND. □ leaders continued to develop and embed leading SEND practice for all staff.

## 5. Area of Excellence

Professional development – forms, mechanisms and sequencing

### Accredited

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

At Hornchurch High, the leadership of professional learning is regarded as a craft, and substantial investments are made to ensure it is of the highest quality whilst continually developing. The commitment to providing teachers with dedicated time for engagement is emphasised. This investment underscores the school's dedication to fostering continuous professional development (CPD) among its teaching staff.

Leaders prioritise the concept of 'systemness' as it eliminates background noise and distractions, allowing staff to concentrate on essential learning objectives. To achieve this, leaders employ a comprehensive approach that involves interconnecting various facets of professional learning. This includes whole-school learning forums, observations, weekly locked-in coaching sessions, subject-specific pedagogy forums (CPDL), learning leadership forums (HoDPods and HOY Pods) and teaching and learning leadership evaluations.

Every teacher receives two protected hours weekly for a one-hour coaching meeting and one hour of subject-specific CPDL. With mentor-coaches using the Hornchurch High Coaching Model, teachers focus on coaching, including co-observation, co-planning and deliberate practice. Each teacher has a single teaching target tracked on a teacher tracker. Work scrutiny targets are 'RAG' rated for continual monitoring. The teacher tracker captures individual professional journeys, emphasising habit changes. This approach ensures personalised and impactful CPD at Hornchurch High.

The timetable is engineered to provide each department with one hour of directed, subject specific CPDL time together each week during the teaching day. This plays a key part in ensuring that teachers collaborate within departments and are able to consistently teach for subject specific, high-quality learning. All forms of CPD are delivered like a lesson; students and adults learn in the same way. All aspects of CPD include four core mechanisms:

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- Build knowledge
- Motivate staff
- Develop teaching techniques
- Embed practice

All teachers actively participate in peer observation, engaging in fortnightly observations: each person observes and is observed. This practice is integral to the school's improvement culture. Each teacher concentrates on a single target, forming the basis of coaching conversations. Feedback, following the Hornchurch High Feedback, is provided within 24 hours. The teacher's target is derived from the Hornchurch High Teaching and Learning framework, a framework developed by combining evidence-informed practices with context-specific insights. This framework serves as a toolkit for teacher planning and establishes a shared language for teaching and learning throughout the school.

Leaders make a concerted effort to retain existing staff by providing a stimulating and supportive environment. They cultivate a truly sustainable staff development programme, beginning at teacher training level leading through to NPQH. Leaders have started to strategically identify graduate talent and Hornchurch High has started to attract, train and retain high quality teachers. Leaders firmly believe in a 'grow-your-own' approach and, if the school has to appoint externally for a middle leadership position, then leaders believe something has gone wrong in terms of professional learning in the school.

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

In 2023, the Progress 8 score was in line with the national average. Students made significant progress gains in three months, from February 2023 to the end of the summer examination series. The rapid progress was down to professional learning being the core driving force, giving teachers structured time and space to strategically plan and develop with a focused aim; a direct result of carefully sequenced professional learning.

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

Name: Serena Madhvani & Jas Padda  
Title: Headteacher & director of teaching and learning  
Email: smadhvani@hornchurchhigh.com jpadda@hornchurchhigh.com



### **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/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>)