

Name of School:	Pickhurst Academy
Head teacher/Principal:	CEO – Matt Rampton Acting Principal – Laura Marsh
Hub:	Pickhurst Juniors Hub
School type:	Academy
MAT (if applicable):	Chancery Education Trust

Estimate at this QA Review:	Outstanding
Date of this Review:	29 November 2017
Estimate at last QA Review	Outstanding
Date of last QA Review	2-4 November 2016
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	4-5 July 2011

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising of host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

School Improvement Strategies	Outstanding
Outcomes for Pupils	Outstanding
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Outstanding
Area of Excellence	The impact of inclusive sport and outdoor learning provision on teamwork, support and growth mindset. ACCREDITED
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Forest School 2015 Differentiation in mathematics: fluid groupings that support and challenge every pupil - 2016
Overall Estimate	Outstanding

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

1. Information about the school

- The school is a four-form entry school which is larger than the average sized junior school.
- Pickhurst Academy joined the Chancery Education Trust in April 2016 after previously being part of the Ignite Trust. Pickhurst is very outward looking school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The percentage of pupils with SEND and with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) has increased significantly, resulting in the development of additional provision on site.
- The population of the school is changing as the proportion of higher income families continues to fall year on year.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Follow up from previous review

- Senior leaders have taken action to cross-reference the self-evaluation form (SEF) and the school improvement plan (SIP) to ensure alignment. These documents are even more useful in promoting school improvement.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Passionate and highly effective senior leaders have clear vision. They lead by example and are uncompromising in their ambition to improve outcomes for all pupils. Pupils and staff work within guidelines whilst being allowed to take responsibility to develop in ways which work for them. A culture of high expectations and trust, where staff have 'supported autonomy' in their roles, drives improved outcomes for pupils.
- Middle leaders are clear about their roles. They are well supported and have a clear understanding of how they monitor and improve standards in their subjects.
- Pickhurst is the lead school of the multi academy trust (MAT), providing support to and sharing practice with other schools in the MAT and beyond. The school delivers many high quality programmes.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous and inclusive based on the 'Cycle of 7'. This includes assessment, appraisal, moderation, pupil progress reviews, and parental reporting.
- Inclusion is a strength of the school. A small group of pupils with more profound needs experience a separate provision for academic learning. Their inclusion in many aspects of school life is increasing over time, with a view to some pupils being fully included later in their school journey.
- Due to effective partnership work with feeder schools and parents, transition is well managed from Key Stage 1. A variety of pupil-centred support for pupils with SEND has improved transitions. Transition to secondary school is strong due to effective partnerships and the curriculum. The environment in Year 6 makes

- pupils 'Year 7 ready.'
- Leaders value pupils by providing quality learning environments in every class, including working walls and learning ladders. An excellent variety of displays of pupils' work enhances learning, ranging from pupil generated displays to permanent examples of high quality pupil work painted on walls.
 - Robust performance management supports improvement in standards across the school, with a half termly focus on attainment and progress. The targets for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 remain high due to the relatively high starting points of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1.
 - ASPIRE (A Support Programme in Reaching Excellence) was set up because, in 2017, Key Stage 2 results showed that, for the first time for many years disadvantaged pupils did not achieve in line with pupils nationally in reading, writing and GPS. The impact of ASPIRE will be measured by improvements in standardised reading scores, end of Key Stage 2 assessments, attendance data and family engagement.
 - Parent engagement is well thought out and supportive. Families receive regular and effective communication and information about pupils' progress and wellbeing. Recent parent surveys reveal a high degree of satisfaction with their children's education.
 - Leaders are committed to listening to pupils. The school council has made a difference to the school; for example, it supports the school's recruitment to the parent-teacher association with ideas to spend the money raised.
 - Pupils in the excellent school council speak enthusiastically about all of the positive strategies at the school. One pupil succinctly reflected the ethos of the school with the statement 'At Pickhurst, every child counts'.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...academic and non-academic attainment and progress data was more usefully presented to aid tracking and planning further.

3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Follow up from previous review

- The school has addressed the issue of a structure for the use of talking partners fully, resulting in pupils supporting each other more effectively in their learning.

3.2 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - What went well

- Due to positive and trusting relationships and a deep knowledge of pupils, there is a positive and safe learning environments in the school. These result in pupils being engaged, confident learners.
- Teacher subject knowledge is strong, with a clear understanding and application of methods to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils trust their teachers to keep them safe and support their learning. Behaviour for learning is a strong feature of classrooms. Pupils delight in trying out new

things, developing and building on their skills as reflective, collaborative and confident learners. Pupils articulate their learning well.

- The creative and well planned curriculum includes the International Primary Curriculum and it exudes British values. It has personal social health and citizenship education at its core.
- A positive risk taking culture applies to pupils and teachers alike. Pupils feel safe to challenge themselves to improve and try out new things. They are confident to challenge teachers appropriately to clarify their learning and gain useful support.
- Teachers use plenary sessions well to check on learning and develop a pupils' growth mindset.
- Work scrutiny evidenced strong progress and high standards of work across subjects and year groups. Verbal and written feedback offers clear next step marking with pupil response, leading to deepened understanding. Exemplary marking, especially in Year 6, makes pupils think about their work.
- Teachers plan meticulously for learning. Planning is set within guidelines yet it allows teachers appropriate flexibility to maximise their own teaching qualities and meet the needs of pupils. Pupils show that they thrive in this ethos allowing them to learn in a way that makes sense to them.
- High quality displays with significant pupil input, working walls and high quality pupil-led display support autonomous learning and celebrate pupils' achievements.
- Targeted questioning meets individual needs. Teachers are confident to probe and 'drill down' to deepen learning. They give pupils time to frame their responses, improving resilience and reasoning. Questioning is used well to assess understanding. In mathematics, teachers effectively encourage verbal and written reasoning to develop mastery.
- In Year 6, pupils are exposed to the highest quality ICT lessons, working collaboratively with partners in different parts of the room using 'live chat', e-mail and PowerPoint. ICT is used well across the curriculum.
- Pupils use established systems of self-assessment, including answer and marking stations, in order to take more responsibility for improving their own learning with no loss of pace in the lesson.

3.3 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Even better if...

- No 'Even better if' was identified at the review.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Most pupils enter the school from the neighbouring infant school with relatively high levels of attainment. Teachers conduct baseline assessments on pupils in the autumn term. The school has developed effective moderation and transition procedures with the main feeder school to ensure that pupils can rapidly adapt to the new curricular requirements.
- Over time pupils have consistently left the school at the end of Key stage 2 well above the national average in all subjects and in the combined measure.

- In 2017, pupils' attainment was well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. In reading, writing and mathematics almost all of the pupils met the expected standard which is significantly above the national average.
- In 2017, most pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined which was over three times the national average.
- In 2017, for the first time in several years, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils did not exceed their peers nationally in reading and writing. There is considerable crossover between the disadvantaged and the SEND group of pupils. The school has immediately responded by putting in place the 'Aspire programme'.
- In 2017, in reading half of the pupils, in writing a quarter of the pupils and in mathematics nearly half of the pupils achieved greater depth. These percentages were above the national averages for reading and mathematics and close to the national average for writing.
- Pupils with SEND made accelerated progress. The school has convincing case studies and cameos which show the learning journeys of SEND and disadvantaged pupils. The school is carefully tracking the progress of all pupils and has extra levels of tracking of both academic and non-academic progress.
- There are small gender differences in progress and attainment which are monitored and are being addressed.
- Pickhurst Academy has the highest ambition for all pupils in both academic and non-academic areas. The school has set very high aspirational attainment targets for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2018.

5. Area of Excellence

The impact of inclusive sport and outdoor learning provision on teamwork, support and growth mindset.

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

Pickhurst is the most successful sporting school across the borough. Boys' football teams have been consistently successful in local and regional competitions. Girls competed in the national championships last year, involving 6000 schools; they reached reaching the final stages and promoting girls' football in the school.

Sport is available for everybody and any pupil who wants to play for the school and who shows an interest in the team will play for the school. There is great pride in 'wearing the shirt'. It is clear that this area of excellent practice is not purely about being good at sport.

There is a wide variety of high quality outdoor learning delivered during the school timetable and in after school and weekend clubs and activities. These include Forest School, gardening club, adventure play areas. The employment of lunchtime play leaders is designed to meet pupils' needs and stimulate interests.

The school has a deep commitment to inclusion which is understood by all. This is

exemplified by one of the pupils on the school council who said that 'if you have disabilities, you are treated the same'.

5.2 What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

A sports coach is employed to coach teachers and support all pupils, including those who are not natural sports stars. This has been complemented by a wide variety of after school and weekend clubs and activities. Leaders have developed a gardening club and an adventure playground. At lunchtime, play leaders lead and support play, games and outdoor learning to keep pupils active. The focus is on excellence and inclusion. Leaders use the environment skilfully to offer the best experience for pupils.

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

Sport and outdoor learning have had direct and indirect effects on both academic and non-academic outcomes for pupils over time. Confidence in the classroom has increased as sport for all has provided a platform for pupils' confidence. Pupils are not afraid to put their hand up and have a go. This competitive thread has benefited pupils in other areas such as the 'Times Table Rock Stars'. The well-developed team ethos, which stems from sporting experience and outdoor learning, has improved resilience, respect and collaboration for all pupils. Pupils understand that sport and being active is not just about winning.

Attendance has improved for all pupils and especially for disadvantaged pupils. The class with the best attendance each week wins the attendance prize resulting in a free session on the 'free flow' outside apparatus.

A pupil on the school council expressed a highlight of the school as 'you get to do adventure sports'.

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

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TITLE: Acting Principal and Deputy Headteacher

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

No additional support is required at this time.

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.