



QUALITY ASSURANCE  
REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR  
NORTHFIELD HOUSE  
PRIMARY ACADEMY

<b>Name of School:</b>	Northfield House Primary Academy
<b>Head teacher/Principal:</b>	Principal: Alex Curran
<b>Hub:</b>	East Midlands South
<b>School type:</b>	Primary
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	The Mead Educational Trust

<b>Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	14/03/2019
<b>Estimate at last QA Review</b>	Outstanding
<b>Date of last QA Review</b>	28/02/2018
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	04/07/2018

## Quality Assurance Review

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

<b>School Improvement Strategies</b>	Outstanding
<b>Outcomes for Pupils</b>	Outstanding
<b>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b>	Outstanding
<b>Area of Excellence</b>	N/A
<b>Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence</b>	Creating a child centred, bespoke curriculum for schools with a high level of deprivation and/or EAL. 28/02/2018 Early Years 07/03/2017
<b>Overall Estimate</b>	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. Context and character of the school

Northfield House Primary Academy is a larger than average-sized 3–11 primary school. The school is situated in the east of the city of Leicester. In November 2015, the school converted to an academy and is a member of The Mead Educational Trust.

The academy's core aims are:

to always be looking for new ideas to improve our school and the lives of our young people

to develop learning behaviours which empower and create successful lifelong learners who are equipped and skilled to flourish and succeed

to create a unique curriculum that enables every child to succeed personally, academically and creatively

to work professionally as a staff team with children, families, the community, governors and the Trust so that we can make a positive difference and continue to go from strength to strength

to create a safe, nurturing and friendly environment where children feel secure, valued and are able to become self-disciplined, self-confident and independent learners

to create responsible citizens who have an understanding and appreciation of the community that they live in and for life in modern Britain.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with an EHC/statement is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high, as is the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average. The school experiences high levels of mobility with significant numbers of pupils entering the school during the academic year.

### 2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- Leaders have fully addressed the EBI from the previous report. Leaders have ensured that improvements to teaching have been sustained.

### 2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Senior leaders have a clear vision and a determined drive to make sure that every aspect of school life supports pupils' achievement. Leaders have established high aspirations and ambitions for all pupils that lead to them

making outstanding progress.

- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of strengths and areas that need further work. Leaders are forward thinking and have a constant focus on improvement. Priorities for improvement are clearly identified in plans and acted upon.
- School leaders' understanding of the needs of the high numbers of pupils who join the school at times other than the usual starting points allows them to manage the learning needs of these pupils. The appointment of high quality specialist staff to support Roma speaking pupils ensures these pupils achieve as well as other pupils at Northfield.
- Leaders responsible for the quality of teaching and learning are perceptive and accurate in their evaluations. Training and support are appropriately targeted so that teachers make improvements rapidly when this is needed. The enquiry groups enable teachers at all levels of experience to take part in relevant and productive research. Collaborative work with other schools enables teachers to share good practice. By working closely with the Trust, the school is able to recruit and retain high quality staff.
- Phase and subject leaders are empowered and feel that they are a central part of school improvement strategies.
- Leaders clearly understand the barriers to achievement faced by disadvantaged pupils. Pupils have access to the same high quality resources as other pupils. The school's philosophy of raising achievement for all pupils enables disadvantaged pupils to achieve as well as their peers.
- High quality documentation, which includes curriculum guides for all subjects, a handbook for the teaching of mathematics and support manuals for staff, to name but a few, is helping to reduce the workload of teachers.
- The school makes excellent use of its resources to provide a rich and interesting curriculum as well as giving pupils an exceptional grounding in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a wealth of after-school clubs, which pupils very much enjoy. Visits and visitors to school give pupils opportunities to make meaningful links between the curriculum and their own lives. The curriculum provides ample opportunities for pupils to excel in music and the performing arts. The novel-led curriculum inspires pupils to develop a love of learning. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The early years provision is very strong. There is a pursuit of excellence which places children at the very heart of all activities. It is a very caring environment but very rigorous in all it does.

### **2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...**

...leaders new to role continued to grow in confidence, enabling them to have an even greater impact on all aspects of school improvement.

### **3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Progress from previous EBIs**

- Leaders have fully addressed the EBIs from the previous report. Teachers and teaching assistants now probe pupils' mathematical understanding more fully. Pupils continue to attain high standards.

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

- Pupils typically experience teaching which is of a consistently good quality. Teachers use their expertise and experience well to stretch and challenge pupils. Learning is deep and progress is rapid.
- Clear and established routines enable lessons to run smoothly. A calm learning environment ensures that pupils feel secure and therefore able to apply themselves to learning. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning. Consequently, transitions between learning activities are seamless and pupils settle down to work without fuss.
- Teachers plan activities that broaden pupils' cultural awareness and understanding, as well as presenting them with golden opportunities for writing and talking at length.
- Teaching assistants do excellent work in supporting pupils. The teaching of phonics is highly effective and provides an appropriate balance between consolidating pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds and applying this to their reading. Phonics and literacy interventions, led by additional adults, benefit all ability groups greatly. Superb support for Roma-speaking pupils enables them to play a full and active part in all activities.
- The teaching of mathematics is very effective. Pupils are supported by super resources and staff skilfully use 'real-life' situations to bring further understanding to their solving of problems. Pupils know that if they go wrong, teaching staff will correct them in a way that shows their efforts have been valued. Staff gain the pupils' respect by ensuring that pupils enjoy their work. Consequently, pupils grow in confidence, concentrate on their work and learn exceptionally well.
- Teachers routinely embed reading and writing extremely well across the curriculum. Pupils know that teachers expect the same high standards in their writing, whether their work is in English or in other curriculum areas. Pupils appreciate the range of books provided for them. Many are developing a real love for books and read widely, regularly and with enjoyment.
- Work in pupils' books, together with observations of lessons, shows that

teachers provide pupils with useful feedback in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils respond to this feedback, which helps them learn from their mistakes and move forward in their learning.

- In the best lessons, teachers use skilful questioning to probe pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. Elements of mastery questions were seen in a variety of lessons.
- Staff understand the needs of disadvantaged pupils very well. The support and intervention work provided for these pupils enables them to play a full and active part in all learning activities.
- Leaders use teachers with specialist skills to very good effect to enhance the quality of learning in subjects such as music and physical education.

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

...the best practice in using assessment for learning techniques is used consistently across the school.

## **4. Outcomes for Pupils**

- Pupils continue to make exceptional progress.
- Children start in the Nursery class with skills below those that are typical for their age. Many children join with speech and language difficulties, some with very little spoken English. They settle quickly and make rapid progress in early writing and reading. In 2018, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above the national average.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the Year 1 phonics national screening check benchmark was broadly in line with the national average.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and in mathematics was broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1. This was also the case for the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth. Overall, these achievements represent very strong progress for this cohort of pupils given their attainment on entry to Year 1.
- Pupils continue to make exceptional progress across Key Stage 2. In 2018, pupils made well above average progress in reading, writing and in mathematics - this was also the case in 2017. In 2018, the end of Key Stage 2 results placed the school in the top three per cent of schools nationally. This exceptional performance received recognition and praise from the Secretary of State for Education.
- Both girls and boys made much better progress than their counterparts nationally. Pupils of different abilities made very strong progress, with lower prior attaining pupils making fantastic progress.

- In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and in mathematics combined was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard was slightly above the national average. Pupils' scaled scores in reading and in mathematics were above their respective national averages.
- The school's strategy to improve attainment for all pupils ensures disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- Those pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) make similar progress to other pupils at Northfield. Specialist EAL support staff work closely with these pupils to ensure they have the best possible start to learning English.
- Systems to identify individual pupils' needs are robust. Sharply focused support ensures pupils with SEND have full access to the curriculum and make excellent progress.
- The quality of pupils' presentation, especially handwriting skills, is of a high standard. The school places a significant emphasis on developing pupils' fine-motor skills. A love of reading is promoted well across the school. Pupils enjoy and are successful in music, art and sport as well as many other subjects.

## 5. Area of Excellence

The school did not propose an area of excellence for this review.

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

Following discussion with the principal, leaders would like to reflect further about what support they might like.

**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.**