



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR HARROWBY CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL AND THE NATIONAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL

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| <b>Name of School:</b>        | Harrowby Church of England Infant School and National Church of England Junior School |
| <b>Headteacher/Principal:</b> | Angela Comerford  |
| <b>Hub:</b>                   | Lincolnshire Hub  |
| <b>School phase:</b>          | Infants and Junior  |
| <b>MAT (if applicable):</b>   | The Lincolnshire Academies Trust  |

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| <b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b> | Effective   |
| <b>Date of this Review:</b>                                | 10/11/2021  |
| <b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review</b>                  | Leading   |
| <b>Date of last QA Review</b>                              | 03/02/2021  |
| <b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>                    | Harrowby Infant School: Good<br>National School: Requires Improvement |
| <b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>                     | Harrowby Infant School: 13/12/2017<br>National School: 13/06/2018     |



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

Although located on separate sites within the town, the two schools very much identify themselves as being as one, with an executive headteacher covering both and a shared board of trustees. There is a Teacher in Charge for each school. The junior school is larger than the average sized junior school, while the infant school is much smaller than average.

The proportion of pupils in the disadvantaged group is broadly in line with the national average, but this number is increasing with a changing demographic. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with only a small number having English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above average, whilst the proportion with an education, health and care plan is below. Stability is very high, with few pupils leaving or joining the schools at other than the usual times.

Since 2012, both schools were members of the Harrowby National Academies Trust, switching in September 2021 to join the Lincolnshire Academies Trust. This is also when the executive headteacher assumed her role.

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

- The recent re-structuring of the senior leadership team has brought stability across both schools. The leaders, who are already experienced practitioners, are growing into their new roles and driving both schools forward. They form a cohesive unit that has the best possible learning and life experiences for the pupils at the forefront of everything they do. There is a great sense of togetherness across both schools, and the physical distance between them does not diminish this unity. Leaders are very caring and they nurture the pupils effectively, something which is closely aligned to the school's Christian ethos. As one senior leader stated, 'everything we do is part of the pupils' social, emotional, spiritual and cultural journey.'

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- Equally, senior leaders promote the school motto, 'Aim high, believe, Fly high, achieve' at every opportunity. This statement appears at regular intervals around the school to inspire pupils to always give of their best.
- Middle leaders are similarly developing well. They have been fully involved in evolving the school development plan because they have been given increased accountability this year. This has enabled this group of leaders to see the 'bigger picture' of whole school planning and they highly value the opportunity to self-evaluate and debate issues. In discussion, they acknowledged the valuable support they receive from senior leaders.
- Recent continuing professional development (CPD) has been based around reviewing and amending existing practice, for example, marking and feedback. Uptake for NPQ training has been strong, with several staff members enrolling on courses at different levels. Senior leaders are now researching which areas of school require further development so that training can be arranged for different staff members to lead on these.
- The coaching model adopted in both schools has enabled leaders to identify strengths and weaknesses. This has led to strong practice being shared and support organised to improve teaching and learning where required. Senior leaders liaise closely with middle leader colleagues and they, in turn, are empowered to support staff in their subject areas. Middle leaders' development is positive, and this support also encourages and enables succession planning for future leadership roles.
- The school has a unique 'Find and Fix' dynamic intervention curriculum model. These interventions take place within the lesson itself or at least during that actual day. For example, any misconceptions in phonics are revisited in the afternoon so that curriculum implementation can be fulfilled, and knowledge gaps closed. Harrowby Infant School uses a thematic approach that the whole school follows. This term the theme is Fabulously Famous, where well-known people are studied. Edward Jenner is one such 'famous' person, linking the area of vaccinations to the NHS. In the current climate, this ensures that the theme is topical.
- The newly introduced PHSE scheme, based on Jigsaw, has been positively received. Pupils have gained an increased awareness of different cultures, for example, with a recent theme being 'Differences.' This has improved teachers' knowledge and provides them with a clear structure to teach these areas with increased confidence.

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

...the excellent leadership practice relating to phonics was extended to benefit a wider range of learners.

...leaders worked with the multi academy trust to explore effective practice to further stretch more able pupils.

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

- The quality of provision is strong across both schools. This is because all staff know the pupils and their families well, so that curriculum planning, and teaching and learning can be adapted to the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers exhibit strong subject knowledge which enables them to bring learning to life. They accompany this with an insistence on pupils' correct use of complex vocabulary and concepts. For example, in a Year 6 Religious Education lesson, pupils rose to the challenge to explore and define 'moral responsibility.'
- Teachers also demonstrate a sound knowledge of pedagogy. As a result, they produce lessons that sustain pupils' interest and motivation. This leads to high levels of engagement in learning. The pace of learning in most lessons is appropriate and so enhances understanding.
- Lessons are effectively planned and well sequenced. This helps pupils to remember what they have previously learned and utilise that knowledge in their current learning. In a Year 5 English lesson, a pupil remarked, 'I remember learning about rhetorical questions before half term – that is helping me today.' Modelling is a positive feature in classrooms. By modelling the task, teachers

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ensure that pupils understand the learning intention at the start so that any misconceptions can be swiftly addressed.

- Staff use assessment for learning strategies frequently. Partner talk was observed in several classrooms, as was the use of 'lollipop sticks' during questioning. This ensured that pupils remained focused as they may be required to answer the next one! Questioning was consistently strong across all year groups.
- Positive relationships abound in all classrooms, where there are purposeful working environments and an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Teachers make learning fun so that pupils really enjoy their learning experiences. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 history lesson where pupils were enacting aspects of the battle of Marathon.
- Teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 enables pupils to learn effectively through play and investigation. The adoption of a new phonics scheme is still in its infancy and is having a positive impact on developing children's knowledge of sounds and how to segment and blend.
- Teachers are given the chance to research how to make the learning environment more effective. Sensory overload has been a major focus and is evidenced in classrooms displayed in more muted colours and less detail. Only information that is geared to helping pupils support and expand their work is now being promoted on walls. Classrooms have a calmer environment as a result, and teachers now question what they put up on walls to overcome any difficulties. This has been particularly helpful for pupils with certain special needs.
- Leaders have focused on presentation of work and teachers are reaping the benefits of this work. The 'granting' of pen licences is seen to be very prestigious and pupils covet this opportunity. Thus, books are well-kept and beautifully presented. Staff have high expectations and pupils strive to meet them.

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

...the structure of lessons was adapted to ensure that higher ability pupils are challenged well in all subjects.

...feedback was more purposeful and relevant to all pupils in order to more swiftly address misconceptions and accelerate progress.

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

- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND receive well-targeted support that enables them to make good progress from their individual starting points. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher's high expectations and positive relationships led to pupils being able to access the learning with confidence.
- Support is closely matched to pupils' needs. This means that teachers accurately model the task so that all pupils can begin their work quickly. The regular use of the talk-partners strategy also enables pupils to understand. In a Year 3 phonics lesson, pupils with SEND benefited by discussing their learning and through re-reading and repeating sounds.
- With minor modifications, for example flexible grouping for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, pupils access the full curriculum. Teachers have the same high expectations for these pupils and they respond accordingly. The rare lapses in attention that occur are well managed because the school's values are always reinforced and understood.
- The experienced SENDco covers the National and Infant schools. An external counsellor is employed once a week to provide additional support when required. This means that any pupil with additional needs gains the right kind of support. Many other members of staff have specific training and expertise to add to the support package. The school's Christian ethos nurtures these pupils and ensures that they achieve well.
- All staff receive a range of CPD to support the needs of pupils. For example, hearing impaired pupils are assisted well in their learning. This training is well disseminated to all staff, including teaching assistants, so that pupils can make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution in helping pupils with SEND access the curriculum. The support they provide helps pupils develop their knowledge and understanding.



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

...staff continued to trial different methods of reading support for pupils with additional needs.

### **5. Area of Excellence**

Not submitted for this review.

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

No additional support at the moment.

**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.**

**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 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.**