

## CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

<b>Name of School:</b>	<b>The Family School London</b>
<b>School Address:</b>	1-15 Bradleys Close, White Lion Street, London N19PN
<b>Hub School:</b>	London Special and AP Hub

<b>Telephone Number:</b>	0203 6934911
<b>Email address:</b>	Stephen.taylor@thefamilyschoollondon.org

<b>Unique Reference Number:</b>	141130
<b>Local Authority:</b>	Islington
<b>Type of School:</b>	Special and Alternative Provision Academy
<b>School Category:</b>	Free School
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	5-14
<b>Number on roll:</b>	30
<b>Head teacher/Principal:</b>	Stephen Taylor

<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Not previously inspected

<b>Date of Quality Assurance Review:</b>	21-22 March 2017
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## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES<sup>1</sup>

<b>School Improvement Strategies:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Outcomes for Pupils are</b>	Outstanding
<b>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:</b>	Good
<b>Area of Excellence:</b>	Not submitted for this review
<b>Previously accredited Areas of Excellence:</b>	Parental engagement and training in family mental health.

### Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that The Family School London appears to have moved beyond the Good grade assessed by the previous Challenge Partners review and is working within the Outstanding grade. However, it has not yet been inspected by Ofsted.

1. 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.

## **Information about the school**

- The Family school, a free school with therapeutic provision, was set up in September 2014 as a specialist alternative provision academy. It is sponsored by the Anna Freud Centre.
- Pupils are admitted in Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 from across North London, currently working with seven boroughs, some of which commission a number of places.
- Families, teachers and health professionals work together to bring about positive change in classroom behaviour and learning. There is a parent and carer curriculum and learning programme that parents follow while their child is at the school. Pupils follow the national curriculum.
- There are currently 30 pupils on roll. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much higher than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who are looked after.
- Around 62% of pupils have education, health and care plans (EHCPs).
- Around half of all pupils have previously been permanently excluded from mainstream and special schools. A number have been out of education for a period of time.
- The school is still in temporary accommodation and is due to move into new buildings in late 2018.

## **School Improvement Strategies**

### **What Went Well**

- The leadership of the school has a shared vision to improve the life chances of the pupils in their care. To this end, they have successfully built a team of dedicated staff who are unstinting in their work with the pupils and families who attend the school.
- From initial referral to the point of reintegration, the school has developed a ground-breaking structure of therapeutic and educational support. This equips pupils with the skills and attitudes needed for successful reintegration into mainstream schools and enables parents to offer better support to their children. The highly effective communication between teachers, therapists and family is a key factor in the success of this approach.
- As the school has developed new senior leaders have been appointed and taken on responsibility and monitoring of different aspects of the school's work. This is a big improvement since the previous review. It has contributed to the smoother running of the school and freeing up the headteacher for more strategic tasks.
- The school is successfully developing a distributed leadership team through the development of middle leaders. A peer mentoring programme supports middle leaders and a leadership target relating to an area of whole school responsibility is included in performance management targets for all.

- The school has a strong commitment to teacher welfare and weekly supervision sessions support teachers with the different demands of their work. A well-being audit of staff to determine needs has been conducted and the senior leadership team has responded to the request for smaller learning and welfare meetings to keep staff updated on pupils' progress.
- There is a clear programme for teachers' professional development and the local authority has provided training for all core subjects. The school draws on staff expertise to provide training 'by staff for staff'.
- The school is oversubscribed and expects to move in to a larger permanent site when the new building is completed in September 2018. Governors and the Headteacher attend planning meetings to ensure the building design will meet the specific requirements of the pupils at the Family School.

### **Even Better If...**

... the school's self-evaluation was a working document that reflected the school's identification of areas for development.

... there was more efficient management and deployment of the work of teaching assistants.

### **Pupil Outcomes**

- Attendance is much improved and is now running at 90%, which although low when compared with national data, is good when compared with 68% for similar schools. The school exceeds its target for individual pupils to improve the attendance they achieved at their previous school by 10%.
- School data shows that 60% of all pupils who have attended the school since its opening have been returned successfully to mainstream or special school provision. Most are only in the school for four terms. Tracking data shows that after one year 95% of reintegrated pupils have successfully sustained their placement.
- Pupil progress is measured and assessed effectively based on the new National Curriculum. The school uses both internal and external systems of moderation to confirm assessment judgements. Pupils make exceptionally good progress towards achieving their targets, with 84% reaching reading targets, 88% reaching writing targets and 92% reaching mathematical targets. Gaps in achievement in literacy and mathematics are identified and progress is accelerated successfully with focused, specific interventions; for example, the teaching of phonics to Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Behaviour for learning tracking is used to measure the improvement in pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils make exceptional gains in these areas while they are at the school. They develop self-awareness and self-control. Their self-esteem and confidence to learn is enhanced and they learn to be supportive of each other.
- The work with parents is exemplary. Parents value greatly the therapeutic benefit from working closely with therapists and teachers and being in the classroom with their children. They show positive changes in attitudes and confidence and their

learning enables them to better support their children in the future. As one mother remarked, 'I no longer feel alone in dealing with my child's difficulties'.

- The school's work with parents provides opportunities for them to improve their own literacy, numeracy and language skills and gain externally accredited qualifications including GCSEs. The school also responds to training requests by parents; for example, providing internet safety courses.
- The school is tracking the long-term success of pupil reintegration. It is working towards trying to establish a national database of comparative successful re-integration data and to track pupils' progress for three years after they have left the school. There is room for the school to strengthen and clarify how it presents its wealth of data relating to academic progress and improvement in behaviour.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **What Went Well**

- In a very short space of time the school has established a strong sense of community to which pupils feel they belong. As a result, they take a real sense of pride in their work and are keen to demonstrate what they have learnt. Many examples of excellent practice were seen.
- Staff know the pupils and their families very well and create supportive relationships without allowing pupils to become over-dependent. Staff are knowledgeable about their subject areas but also highly skilled in behaviour management techniques.
- High expectations for behaviour and learning ensure a real sense of challenge for pupils and they make sure they do their best to please the adults they respect.
- Pupils were fully engaged, on task and enjoying their work. For example, in a Key Stage 3 lesson on Romeo and Juliet, pupils leant forward in their seats to capture every word of the dialogue and were ready to read aloud excerpts for themselves.
- Tasks and questioning are geared to suit the abilities of individual pupils. For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson about perimeters, four tasks were set for seven pupils so that all could succeed and learn. This represents an improvement since the previous Challenge Partners' review.
- Opportunities to develop social relationships and to practise collaboration and teamwork are fully exploited by teachers and teaching assistants and help pupils prepare for re-integration into mainstream schooling.
- Progress over time is evident in the quality and quantity of work in exercise books and writing portfolios. Work is meticulously marked and assessed and helps pupils take a pride in their presentation. Progress is assessed regularly using the Arbor system and this is moderated internally and externally with a mainstream school.

- Many lessons had a clear learning purpose which was shared well with pupils. Most teachers provided cameos so that observers could understand the context of the learners.
- The bright and informative classroom displays help to create a calm and purposeful learning environment. Staff work creatively in the current, unsuitable accommodation to give pupils access to outdoor play and physical activities.
- Exciting curriculum opportunities are provided which engage and interest pupils. For example, pupils went to a city farm to study 'where does our food come from', as part of a well-being week.

### **Even Better If...**

... there was more consistency across the school relating to clear learning objectives, the provision of context sheets and the match of tasks to different levels of ability.

... teaching assistants were deployed more efficiently.

### **Quality of Area of Excellence**

Not submitted for this review.

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

Following discussion with the headteacher, the school would like some additional support with...

- supporting non-specialist teachers at Key Stage 3 with mathematics and science.

**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.**

