



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR THE PEARS FAMILY SCHOOL

Name of School:	Pears Family School
Headteacher:	Matthew Hillman
Hub:	London Special and AP
School phase:	Alternative Provision
MAT:	Not applicable

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	22/11/2021
Overall Estimate at last QA Review:	Leading
Date of last QA Review:	02/05/2018
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	21/06/2017



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR THE PEARS FAMILY SCHOOL

Quality Assurance Review

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

Leadership at all Levels	Leading
Quality of Provision and Outcomes	Leading

AND

Quality of Provision and Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs

Area of Excellence	Not offered at this review
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Not applicable
Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate	Leading

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

The Pears Family School (PFS) is an alternative provision in Islington, which provides short term educational and therapeutic support for young people, from the ages of 5 to 14. The school was set up in 2014 and is sponsored by the Anna Freud National Centre (AFNC) for children and families. There is great demand for places at the school. There are currently 36 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils have been excluded from mainstream or special schools. Pupils may be on the PFS roll or also on the roll of another school. Pupils join the school from a range of local authorities.

The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above the national average. Pupils come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils have education, health and care plans. On arrival at PFS pupils are significantly behind their peers, making no progress and may not have previously been attending school.

PFS has been successful in reintegrating pupils to more appropriate medium and long term placements by providing exemplary classroom practice, innovative and thoughtful support for families and bespoke transition support to schools, to maximise opportunities for pupils to succeed in their new placement.

2.1 Leadership at all Levels - What went well

- Leaders have established an inspirational, committed and highly capable team, supporting pupils and their families.
- PFS shares ground breaking practice, locally and more widely, including, bespoke training to schools via the AFNC partnership, the OCN course for families and teaching assistants (TAs) and parents at other schools, through the DfE national programme for disseminating good practice.
- Leaders promote progress in three key areas for sustainable reintegration: academic progress: reducing gaps in learning; and behaviour for learning, There is a system around each pupil which supports them through 'thick and thin.'
- Leaders understand that an effective curriculum needs to emphasise reading, English and mathematics. Alongside this is a need to develop the skills required to learn effectively, including executive functioning skills and developing behaviours for learning, so that pupils develop confidence and improved self-image.
- Morning and afternoon briefings, and a daily offer of supervision, ensure support for 'emotional hygiene.' Leaders understand and value their staff as individuals to promote well-being.
- Leaders encourage staff to develop their individual skills and passions, for example TAs lead PE, art and music. Most training is delivered to the whole school, to ensure that TAs' crucial roles in parent engagement are well developed.

- Displays encourage pupils' aspirations for the future. Inspiring images celebrate Black History month. Parent and child photos take pride of place in the school entrance.
- The behaviour policy and systems to promote positive behaviour are personalised, data driven and highly effective. Leaders ensure that staff listen to the behaviour, record it well and analyse it to ensure that everyone learns. Case studies show excellent progress in promoting prosocial behaviour to live a good life.
- The rate of pupils reintegrated into a more appropriate school settings is consistently high and sustained, as the curriculum successfully prepares pupils for the next step in their life. Up to half of the school cohort reintegrates each year, continuing their educational journey.
- Reintegration or transfer to a new school is highly effective, employing joint target setting and progress reviews with the receiving school, PFS and the family. TAs support pupils in their 'new school', promoting successful and sustained reintegration. In many cases after transfer, PFS supports families. Some families continue to attend the Wednesday multi-family groups and training.
- Parents and families described their experiences of PFS support in glowing terms. They value the excellent PFS school, OCN level 2 'Parent and carer engagement in child mental health' course and regular learning with staff to support their children. One parent wrote a wonderful 'recipe for the family school engendered trust' – key ingredients being; Parents and Children, Active Warmth, Respectful Curiosity, Hopeful Motivation and Supportive Challenge.'
- The work at PFS is systemic and restorative.

2.2 Leadership at all Levels - Even better if...

... leaders ensured that the strong progress around school in mathematics were better represented, so there was greater clarity between what the pupils did and what they learned.

3.1 Quality of Provision and Outcomes - What went well

- Due to excellent knowledge and strong commitment to pupils and their families, relationships are supportive and warm. Staff have high expectations and provide sensitive support for pupils' learning and conduct. There is a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere across the school.
- The well-designed curriculum supports academic, physical, social and emotional development, resulting in lasting improvements in mental well-being and behaviour and a high rate of successful transitions to appropriate education settings.
- Team work is highly effective. TAs and other adults are well deployed to maximise physical and emotional safety and learning opportunities.

- In a lively music production lesson, the highly skilled TA led learning and promoted literacy by showing and reading pupil generated lyrics on the interactive whiteboard. In this session a parent learned alongside her son, supporting high levels of pupil engagement.
- In a Phase 3 science lesson pupils learned independently. In English pupils enthusiastically shared their learning in pairs, debating and predicting the next part of a story. Questioning was used precisely and highly effectively, to assess learning, clarify concepts and to encourage pupils to build on each other's responses. Pupils used a variety of methods to feedback including writing post-it notes.
- In a Phase 4 English lesson, staff were well deployed, resulting in pupils enthusiastically debating issues about a dam, continuing beyond the lesson end.
- In a Phase 5 lesson, the teacher revisited learning on emotional regulation and executive functioning, to discuss the barriers pupils will need to overcome, when transferring to their new school. The teacher used excellent resources and support so that pupils could develop a 'word bank,' to support the development of a haiku. The TA expertly led learning when the teacher was required to step out of the lesson.
- In reflection time at the end of the day, a parent expertly used the language of executive functioning, to give specific feedback about her son's day in school. Staff and pupils reinforced this expertly and warmly.
- Pupils take pride in their work, showing resilience and stamina. Their English books show strong progress with clear sequencing of learning. In English, pupils take opportunities to write in short bursts and extensively where appropriate. Phase 1 mathematics books showed rapid progress.
- In 2020, pupils across the board made at least two steps of progress along the school's mastery continuum, which showed exceptional progress. In 2020, pupils exceeded the schools behaviour for learning improvement targets. Despite Covid issues, attendance was well above the national average for PRUs. The rate of fixed-term exclusions was well below the national average for PRUs. Aspirational leaders set targets for PRS in line with mainstream attendance figures.
- Many pupils enter PFS with little or no attendance at previous settings and/or exclusion. The attendance of persistent non-attenders and pupils who have been excluded significantly improves, due to increased trust and confidence.
- Pupils take responsibility for themselves as they become more settled, and take opportunities to mentor younger pupils, for example as mentors in Smart Gym sessions.
- A pupil in Phase 2 was keen to engage with the school visitors. He explained that at his last school he didn't join lessons and felt that he was not liked. Since joining PFS he has made significant progress. When asked how this has happened, he explained, 'Staff encourage me. I know that they want me in lessons.....You don't see it (the support). It's all around.'

3.2 Quality of Provision and Outcomes - Even better if...

...the excellent approaches and practice in different phases of the school were more effectively shared across the school to continually improve practice.

4.1 Quality of Provision and Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- School numbers are extremely small, and the provision is totally personalised, so it was agreed with Challenge Partners and the school that completing this section is not helpful to the school.

4.2 Quality of Provision and Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

...Not applicable.

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

PFS is well connected and is able to give and find support as required.

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.



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR THE PEARS FAMILY SCHOOL

Both the School Support Directory and the Shared Leading Practice events can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website.