



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR THE PILGRIM SCHOOL

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Name of School:	The Pilgrim School
Headteacher/Principal:	Steve Barnes
Hub:	Lincolnshire
School phase:	Age 4-19
MAT (if applicable):	N/A

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	03/03/2020
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	This is the school's first review.
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	01/02/2018



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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 Effective

Quality of Provision and Outcomes Effective

AND

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

Area of Excellence School did not make a submission.

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate Effective

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

1. Context and character of the school

The Pilgrim is an unusual and complex hospital school that serves the whole of Lincolnshire and is located on three widely scattered sites across the county. The main site is in Lincoln and the other sites are in Louth and Amber Hill near Boston.

Students have a wide range of needs including medical conditions, social, emotional and mental health difficulties, high-functioning autistic spectrum disorder and school refusal. Some of these students require tuition at home although the budget for this is limited. Generally students have the cognitive ability to access a mainstream school curriculum although many of them have significantly delayed achievement. Students often come to the school very late in their school careers, or progress to be placed in other schools so the mobility factor is high.

The school is designated for 150 students aged 4-16 but the only provision made on the three sites is for students at Key Stages 3 and 4. However, some home tuition is made for younger children whilst they recover from illness. Some students are dual registered with mainstream schools and some have education, health and care plans (EHCPs).

The school has a history of being badly accommodated so that it has been unable to meet the full demand. However, actions have recently been taken and whilst the premises now being used are compact they are in very good order. The space available is very well maintained and staff have made great efforts to provide appropriate learning environments.

33% of students are eligible for the student premium, which provides additional funding for children who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care. Less than 1% of students have English as an additional language (EAL) and likewise less than 1% are not White British.

2.1 Leadership at all Levels - What went well

- The values of this remarkable and very complex school are evident within a publicly displayed letter – *“Dear Students. We believe in you. We trust you. You are listened to. You are cared for. You are important. You will succeed. Love, The Pilgrim Family.”* This is underpinned by a commitment to the “HOPE” philosophy that drives the curriculum.
- Leaders have established a strong culture in which students receive high levels of support in order to realise their academic potential, whilst also receiving similarly high levels of support for their personal needs, their emotional well-being and their self-confidence. Students are given every opportunity to prepare for their future lives. This approach is greatly strengthened by a wide range of enrichment activities and educational visits outside the usual school hours.

- The school is flexibly but thoughtfully organised to cope with the unpredictable demand for places, the constantly varying numbers of different need-types and the huge size of a predominantly rural catchment area that has a number of socially and economically deprived families.
- Many changes have taken place during recent years. These include accommodation and location changes, new members of staff and a complete revision of the offer made to students. Much remains a work in progress but leaders have a clear view of where the school needs to be and how this will be reached.
- The school has successfully recruited effective specialist teachers. Improved outcomes in mathematics is one example of this.
- Given the unusual nature of the school, particularly the constantly changing cohorts, the difficulty of presenting meaningful comparisons of student outcomes over extended periods is well recognised. Leaders are currently working on a revised progress tracking system so that all aspects of progress by individual students can be recorded and analysed. This new, purposeful system will allow comprehensive records to be kept of records academic progress, PSHE, enrichment experiences, attendance, emotional well-being, behaviour and other holistic data. This in turn will lead to a wider analysis of outcomes.
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the curriculum takes place through a series of 'deep dives' into subjects and non-academic areas such as attendance and behaviour. This impressive approach is closely linked to performance management arrangements and enables leaders to systematically carry out learning explorations, work scrutinies, comparisons with teacher standards and progress review outcomes.
- Much time is devoted to working collaboratively with other supporting agencies such as CAMHS. The diminishing availability of external agencies is increasingly apparent but the school is committed to ensuring that as far as possible its work is co-ordinated with family and mental health support services.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is highly valued by the school. Many non-teachers have already obtained advanced qualifications that have enabled them to take on more responsibilities. Current projects include a number of staff working towards 'maths mastery', some working towards nationally recognised courses for middle and senior leadership and others researching high impact teaching within a local alliance. In addition the school provides guidance to other local schools on mental health issues. The school is also a corporate member of the Association for Coaching.
- A key feature of the school is the "RSO" team - a team of ten "Reintegration and Support Officers" led by a Pastoral Manager/Assistant Head. The team provides a full range of additional, personalised support from pre-admission to transition. This includes induction, preparation for any necessary home tuition, multi-agency liaison and specific interventions such as "Resilient Me" and "Choices". In order to track progress in all these areas the team have devised "Pilgrim 16" that shows personal growth over time and any continuing needs. A safeguarding overview is

another team responsibility along with forming relationships with parents, gathering parent and student views and providing guidance to classroom staff. The headteacher made an open statement during the review that whilst he was totally dispensable the school would cease to function without the RSO team.

- Leaders have identified that the RSO team should start giving opportunities to parents to help them develop coaching skills. In addition it has also been accepted that the offer to home-taught students will become more structured and that small steps of progress will in future be captured and recorded.

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

- ... the self-evaluation and improvement plan focused more clearly on impact upon student outcomes.
- ... the school improvement plan identified clearer measurable success criteria for the intended impact upon student outcomes so that all stakeholders, including governors, have a clear view the intended future outcomes.
- ... all leaders were involved in the analysis and evaluation of student outcomes and agreeing where any shortfalls may be and what measurable success criteria for further improvement may be.

3.1 Quality of Provision and Outcomes - What went well

- The school has a calm atmosphere in which everyone is respected and very few serious behavioural incidents occur. The Student Voice survey returns support this view. In discussions, students also state that there is no bullying at the school and that they feel safe. They value the work done by staff to promote friendships and the proper use of social media.
- Classrooms are very well resourced and staff use information technology with skill. A wide range of printed resources is also available. Some rooms are used imaginatively so that specialist subjects can be studied.
- Although classes are small, classroom staff cope well with groups of students from different year groups and with different needs. They plan lessons with great care.
- The most effective teaching is characterised by an inclusive atmosphere and well pitched tasks that build upon previous learning. These tasks provide just the right level of challenge and are accompanied by careful questioning that encourages students to improve their work. In many classes learning tasks are well supported by skilfully deployed support staff who carefully judge the degree of intervention required. In addition, workbooks are clearly marked so that students have useful feedback, including information about the level at which they are working and how they can improve further.
- Teachers often encourage students to reflect, re-examine their work and consider how improvement will lead to good qualifications and better prospects in their adult lives.
- An art lesson provided a good example of very high expectations being set and

students being encouraged to develop their own ideas. This resulted in exceptional pieces of work being produced.

- Teacher's subject knowledge is often notably strong when teachers are able to give step-by-step guidance. A mathematics lesson on 'construction' provided a good example.
- Holistic progress is evaluated three times per year and students who are not making sufficient progress are given further consideration at senior leader meetings. In addition staff take part in "solution circles" to consider the most appropriate intervention and ensure that actions taken are followed up.
- Attendance is a key issue for some students so this is very closely monitored and there are incentives for good attendance. Attendance at any school prior to admission is usually zero but then increases rapidly. Excluding persistent absences, average attendance is now 85% having increased from 68% three years ago. Persistent absences are usually linked to medical conditions but these reduce the average attendance to 74%.
- The average point score using "Pilgrim 16" shows an 80% increase over time in student resilience and allied characteristics. The "effect size" of this is a very positive 0.45.
- Using the school's own version of the Lincolnshire "Sign of Safety" scores shows an average increase of 73% in student wellbeing over time.
- The great majority of students transfer to an appropriate placement. The NEET figure for last year was 6% but this represents three students, of whom two became health service in-patients.
- A review of the records of outcomes for Year 11 in 2019 showed that the highest attainment was in English and the greatest progress was made in science and mathematics. Despite many late admissions, the figures for achievement at level 4 GCSE were English 35%, mathematics 33% and science 44%.
- A book scrutiny and current records indicate that baseline assessment, tracking and subsequent progress meetings and interventions resulted in very effective teaching. The new tracking system introduced this year has enabled much more focused attention being given to student targets, interventions and support arrangements. Progress in mathematics is clearly evident both in books and the assessment information. The biggest impact of interventions is in mathematics and science. Books show a clear sequence of learning linked to recent curriculum development and good use of assessment, particularly for higher ability students. Books also included evidence of consistent feedback to students and the identification of next steps. Best practice included students responding to feedback.

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

- ... teaching styles became more varied in order to meet the needs of all students. Less able students in particular need to have means other than worksheets and written answers as a way of making and showing progress. In addition, using more visual aids and videos, more references to real-life situations and encouraging

more collaborative work will allow students time to reflect on their learning during discussions such as a plenary session.

...students always encountered ever increasingly challenging curriculum material.

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

- Home tuition is provided for fifty students of varying ages who cannot attend school because of physical or mental health difficulties. Funding by the local authority limits this to five hours per student per week so the school works hard to overcome the difficulties that this presents. The constant aim is to help students to attend school in the usual way.
- A large team of part-time tutors are employed to provide tailor-made programmes for each student. Much work is done to train and support the tutors so that they are well prepared for the many challenges that they may face. The quality assurance procedures in place are comparable to those within the school and outcomes are carefully tracked and moderated.
- Much work is also done with parents so that they feel supported, are able to take a consistent approach and where possible work towards an agreed plan for re-integration into school.
- When reintegration into school is a possibility careful discussions are held with the receiving school to ensure that the transition is successful. This is particularly important to help younger students re-integrate into a primary school so that their eventual transition into a secondary school is done within their peer group.
- Last year, home-tutored students had very similar levels of GCSE outcomes to the other students.
- Thirty-nine students currently have EHCPs and a further twenty are being assessed for one. Their achievement is closely monitored by the SENCO and given even greater scrutiny at the regular "track and act" progress meetings. As a result classroom staff have a clear understanding of their individual needs.
- Examination arrangements for EHCP students include any additional resources or time allowed and a separate room if necessary. Mock examinations are of particular benefit in preparing these students.
- Planning for the transition of EHCP students is started at an earlier stage. Careful experiences are built into the overall plan so that they are more likely to succeed when becoming full-time in the new setting.

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

...efforts were continued to develop strategies for home-tutored progressing more



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quickly to school attendance.
...efforts were continued to work with the local authority and local agencies in order to increase the funding and service levels available to home tutored students.

5. Area of Excellence

The school did not make a submission. However, there are at least two projects within school that could be very suitable for future submission.

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

This was the school's first review and leaders now need time to think about additional support. They certainly want to have one more senior leader trained as a Challenge Partners reviewer as soon as possible. It is likely that they will want to form a link with other similar school that have had Areas of Excellence accredited.

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.

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