

**REVIEW REPORT FOR  
PEAR TREE COMMUNITY  
JUNIOR SCHOOL**

|                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Name of School:</b>         | Pear Tree Community Junior School |
| <b>Head teacher/Principal:</b> | Andrew Sharp                      |
| <b>Hub:</b>                    | Transform                         |
| <b>School type:</b>            | Junior                            |
| <b>MAT (if applicable):</b>    | Transform Academy Trust           |

|                                         |                      |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Estimate at this QA Review:</b>      | Requires Improvement |
| <b>Date of this Review:</b>             | 20/03/2019           |
| <b>Estimate at last QA Review</b>       | Requires improvement |
| <b>Date of last QA Review</b>           | 26/02/2018           |
| <b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b> | Inadequate           |
| <b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>  | 06/11/2016           |



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

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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:

|                                                        |                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>School Improvement Strategies</b>                   | GOOD                              |
| <b>Outcomes for Pupils</b>                             | REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT              |
| <b>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b>    | REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT              |
| <b>Area of Excellence</b>                              | None submitted for this review.   |
| <b>Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence</b> | None submitted in the last review |
| <b>Overall Estimate</b>                                | REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT              |

*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**

- Pear Tree Community Junior School is a three-form entry junior school located in a high social deprivation area of south Derby.
- Over half of the pupil population is in the disadvantaged category, which is well above the national average. Many more fall into this group without officially being recognised as such.
- A wide range of different ethnicities are represented in the school, with thirty-seven mother languages registered. Over three-quarters of the pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). White Other and Roma pupils form the main ethnic groups, accounting for over half the pupils on roll. Needless to say, both of these overall proportions are in excess of the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average; seven pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Transience is a major issue for the school, with many pupils leaving or joining the school at other than the usual times. A substantial number leave or return a number of times.
- The school has benefited from valuable support since joining the Transform Trust. The senior leadership team comprises the headteacher and his deputy, along with two assistant headteachers.
- The school's motto is "With trust and care we will grow and flourish".

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

- The leadership team prioritised quality-first teaching. This has become more consistent through 'must haves' in the classroom that should be seen across the school. Teachers have adopted these non-negotiables, which is leading to improved standards of teaching. This raised confidence in the teaching of mathematics and correspondingly, outcomes. Positive aspects that work in this area have since been transferred to English to generate improvement in reading and writing.

### **2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well**

- The drive and dynamism of the headteacher cannot be underestimated. Together with his other senior leaders, they form a united team that is determined to accelerate the school's performance in order to provide the best possible outcomes for the pupils.

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- Senior leaders are a very reflective group, which ensures that all policies and strategies are always under review and modifications are made when required to make them more effective. The leadership team is growing in strength. A change in the structure has led to senior leaders thriving in their roles with the additional responsibility they have adopted. The middle leader stratum has become stabilised through permanent appointments. They, too, are developing into their positions and taking an increasingly effective lead on English, mathematics and SEND.
- The school improvement plan sets clear targets and priorities that over time become 'rag-rated' to indicate progress. The document is 'live' so that alterations can be made, and the headteacher has set a 100 Day Challenge so that items should be completed within that time-frame. The introduction of Times Table Rockstars is a typical example that is gathering success in raising progress because pupils are gaining challenge through mental arithmetic.
- Shared reading has been successful in raising standards. It is helping pupils with reduced language acquisition to overcome their barriers to learning, and reading continues to be a major focus for all staff. The aim now is to raise outcomes closer to those seen in writing and mathematics.
- Knowledge Organisers have been introduced across the school because they highlight precisely what skills pupils need to understand in English and mathematics in each year group. They support pupils learning but also enable teachers to improve the structure of learning for their class.
- Standardised national tests in English and mathematics provide data on which to assess pupils' progress. Additional tests and criteria provide a clearer indication of where pupils are succeeding or require extra support. Through pupil progress meetings, this information accurately highlights which pupils are at least reaching age-related expectations and who needs interventions to boost their learning. Trust-wide moderation validates this process.
- Re-scheduling parents' meetings have encouraged more parents to find out about their child's progress. These sessions take place throughout a designated day to accommodate parents' work hours. The impact of this change has been dramatic in engaging parents in their children's learning.
- The development of the communication and language hub has had a major impact in supporting pupils with limited English or who are new to the language. A specialised building has been refurbished to provide purposeful facilities to develop knowledge and vocabulary to enable pupils to better access the curriculum. Growing numbers are swiftly re-introduced to their classes once their language skills are recognised to be suitable.

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

- ...there was a concrete strategy to improving spelling across the school.
- ...the role of middle leaders was further developed to increase their involvement in whole school strategic aspects.
- ...all staff continued to embed the strategies that lead to improved outcomes.

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

- The previous EBI, linked to modelling, has resulted in efficacious training from the trust so that all staff have improved their practice. The first model is linked to pupils achieving age-related expectations while the second model in the sequence relates more to achieving greater depth.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved noticeably since last year's review and leaders are now focused on ironing out the inconsistencies that still exist.
- Positive relationships abound and the mutual respect teachers have engendered results in a calm learning environment in which pupils arrive in school expecting, and wanting, to learn. This correlates with the high levels of engagement that pervade the classrooms.
- Teachers use, and insist upon, the use of correct and advanced subject-specific vocabulary. This was commonly observed in most classrooms but nowhere more so than in the communication and language hub. Staff made constant referral to pupils using the appropriate terminology.
- Questioning is a strong aspect of teaching in many classrooms. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the teacher did not accept first answers from pupils and continued to probe their understanding.
- The standard of behaviour has improved across the school, hence behaviour for learning is now positive in most lessons. In another mathematics lesson, when the pitch was just right, pupils were very enthusiastic to learn more and deepen their knowledge.
- In the best lessons, structures and routines are embedded. Teachers set high expectations and reinforce the Pear Tree values at every opportunity.

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- Modelling works effectively in the majority of lessons, where teachers ensure that pupils clearly understand the learning intention. One teacher skilfully showed the class deliberate misconceptions and then asked pupils to correct them. Modelling extends to 'clothes-lines' in every classroom, displaying examples of current work that pupils can refer to. Similarly, learning walls, displays and other resources add to pupils' independence.
- When challenge is appropriate, pupils enjoy testing themselves with the tasks teachers set, one saying, "I don't want to do the easier task, I want to do the harder one."
- The focus on the development of reading has engendered a passion for this subject. Challenging and more appropriate texts have been selected to fuel pupils' desire to improve their language skills through reading. One pupil stated, "reading is power".
- Pupils' books reflect an enthusiasm for learning and progress over time is evident, although some inconsistencies were identified.
- Continuing professional development has been linked to the sequencing of learning which has added to teachers' confidence in their delivery. This continues to grow in most instances.
- The 'Pear Necessities' have been designed to reiterate the expectations and keys to unlock successful teaching and learning, as well as applying to broader aspects of school life. These 'non-negotiables' spell out the expectations for all staff to aim for high quality lessons by establishing the essentials that all lessons should include.

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

- ...teachers ensured there was greater consistency in the quality of teaching.
- ...the challenge and pitch of lessons was more focused on improving outcomes for all pupils.
- ...leaders re-assessed the curriculum and focus of learning in afternoon lesson.

**4. Outcomes for Pupils**

- Key Stage 1 data for pupils entering the school indicates pupils' attainment and progress are well below national expectations. Many pupils join from overseas with no associated data, some with no previous schooling. Large numbers begin with considerable barriers to learning, frequently with multiple issues, which consequently impacts negatively on the school's data.
- The school's data follows the pattern typically seen in junior schools, where attainment and progress scores are generally lower than would be seen in primary settings.

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- Key Stage 2 results in 2018 were significantly below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected level and very few pupils achieved the greater depth standard. The combined attainment figure was similarly well below the national benchmark. Progress measures were stable in reading but well below the average mark. Much improved was writing, which fell into the average category while mathematics was below average.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils was below average although there were only small differences between their attainment and that of their non-disadvantaged peers in the school. They were still a long way behind the figures for non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- Reading is a difficult area for improvement because many pupils have limited language development, but a focus on accelerating progress in this area is designed to improve this aspect. The communication and language hub is having significant impact in raising all aspects of pupils' learning but particularly in developing wider vocabulary and exposing them to correct language that is used in the right context.
- Mathematics outcomes are stronger across the school as a whole, but the deficit in girls' achievement last year is being addressed, thus in-school data indicates their performance is rising.
- Each class teacher has a clearer understanding of the individual progress of each pupil so that interventions are commenced earlier in order to have deeper impact. The initiation of a greater depth intervention group is focusing more on those pupils with the potential to attain higher standards. This is seeing success, with almost all of those pupils already reaching the desired levels of greater depth.
- Current progress is more favourable this year, reflecting the impact strategies are having and that the legacy of inadequate teaching has been addressed; teaching is consistently stronger. Key Stage 2 results are not set to see dramatic improvement this year but lower down the school, strong progress is evident.

**5. Area of Excellence**

None submitted for this review.

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

Nothing currently.

**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.**