



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR BLESSED DOMINIC CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School
Head teacher/Principal:	Geraldine Pears
Hub:	Compton
School type:	Primary
MAT (if applicable):	N/A

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	04/02/2019
Estimate at last QA Review	OUTSTANDING
Date of last QA Review	29/11/2017
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	OUTSTANDING
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	02/10/2018



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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:

School Improvement Strategies	OUTSTANDING
Outcomes for Pupils	OUTSTANDING
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	OUTSTANDING
Area of Excellence	None submitted
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Religious Literacy 29/11/2018 Computing 23/11/2016
Overall Estimate	OUTSTANDING

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

- Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School has expanded to a two-form entry primary school in one of the country's most deprived areas, situated in the London Borough of Barnet and in the Diocese of Westminster. The school is due to relocate to a brand new primary school in summer 2019 on the nearby catholic secondary school site. There are 435 pupils on roll, making the school much bigger than the average primary school.
- The estate is undergoing major regeneration and many families are in temporary accommodation. Hence, mobility is high as families are being rehoused in other areas of London and of the country.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. This is much higher than the national average. There is a similar picture for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is also significantly higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average.
- The school holds a large number of awards, including Investors in People, School Travel Plan Gold, National Association for Able Children in Education (NAACE) ICT, Healthy School Gold, Eco Silver, School Games Silver, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Primary Science Quality Mark, International School, Fairtrade Active and Fair Achiever. The school is currently working towards the NAACE Challenge Award which is aimed at excellent provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- The school enjoys successful partnerships with several local schools and is also part of the Catholic Barnet Primary Schools Partnership.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- The previous EBI has been fully addressed. Leaders have used the excellent practice in the school to increase successfully the level and quality of challenge throughout the school. This is clearly evident across all areas of the curriculum.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The dedicated headteacher talks passionately about the culture of 'no excuses' within the school. The question, 'what can we do to help our pupils be super-successful in the future?' underpins the school's aspirational ethos. Changes in the structure of the senior leadership team (SLT) have strengthened leadership stability and built capacity for continued improvement.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) aims to 'home-grow' leaders. The headteacher said that she knows how strong her leaders at all levels are in driving top quality teaching and learning; 'our children are very lucky'. One subject leader

said, 'there is no-one in our school who is not giving their all'. Every decision is based on what is best for pupils and the community. Relationships at all levels are exemplary and provide the solid foundation from which staff and pupils thrive.

- Staff ensure that the curriculum provides memorable experiences. Pupils speak fondly of activities such as African mask making, citing the reasons for their enjoyment as using the traditional methods that real people used years ago.
- The school's monitoring cycle has been deliberately planned with consistency in mind. Paying meticulous attention to activities such as book looks elicits precise information that is used to moderate assessments and move learning on. Last year, a transition day in July enabled each year group to showcase their work for the year group below. This enlightened pupils' awareness of the higher expectations to follow, increasing accountability and ambition for both staff and pupils.
- The focus on achieving greater depth in writing is ensuring that pupils understand what they need to do to achieve higher standards. A tangible improvement from the autumn term confirms that more pupils are making the gains they need to move forward. Disadvantaged pupils are currently making strong progress and there is no difference between the quality of the work in their books from non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Moderation is always a high priority and leaders evaluate judgements with other schools and in-house, led by phase leaders. After termly analysis of assessment information, teachers identify what is in place for their higher attainers to ensure they remain on track to meet the higher standards.
- The school is very well resourced. A specialist dyslexia teacher supports 36 pupils. Additional teachers and teaching assistants support pupils in interventions and booster sessions. A two tier approach, using entry and exit data from interventions, ensures that bespoke support is implemented.
- Leaders are adept at identifying each pupil's specific needs and implement the exact emotional support that these pupils need in order to progress academically. Last year's Year 6 cohort included several disadvantaged pupils who joined in Year 5 with complex problems, some of whom had been excluded from their previous settings. Leaders themselves supported the teaching which ensured accelerated progress, some of which was from exceptionally low starting points.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...none identified.

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

- The previous EBI has been fully addressed. The school is working towards the NAACE Challenge Award which accredits excellence in provision for more able, gifted and talented pupils. Continuing professional development (CPD) has focused on improving levels of challenge and the impact of this training is evident in pupils' books and in lessons.

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

- Enthusiastic and resilient pupils enjoy learning because learning behaviours are well established. The exceptionally positive climate for learning uses pupils' mistakes so that they learn from each other. The topic-rich, celebratory learning environment provides a wealth of prompts that pupils independently use as reminders to continue the flow of learning. Key vocabulary is everywhere, providing a constant model for pupils to use appropriate technical language when speaking and writing. Engagement is consistently high.
- Pupils show immense pride in their school and work. They enjoy a wealth of responsibilities such as playground buddy and school councillor. Councillors said, 'I have more confidence in myself'... 'I am interested in *everything* that is going on in the school now'.
- Religious education plays an integral part in character development, teaching important life values. All curriculum areas interrelate because links between subjects and prior learning are seamless. In a Year 3 computing lesson to create an animation, subjects merged from the class historical text, 'Escape from Pompeii'. Year 4 pupils immersed themselves in costing a road trip to the USA, each group working on differentiated problems.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to spark pupils' interests such as modelling, moving outdoors, 'hot seating', paired/group discussions and changes of pace and voice. Activities link to real life to make learning memorable. Less able and underconfident pupils make strong progress as a result of carefully planned resources that give them the support they need at the time. Teaching assistants use question stems to successfully probe pupils' understanding.
- An extensive variety of questions moves learning on for different purposes. Adults' questioning techniques are well embedded. For example, when Year 2 pupils explored changing materials, the teacher's question, 'do you have something to add?', facilitated collaborative discussion.
- Challenge is a successful feature of lessons, where teachers aim high by expecting pupils to take ownership of their learning and challenge themselves. Books show differentiated tasks that ensure pupils make positive progress at their own level. Year 1 pupils challenged themselves to create personal qualities needed by real life superheroes. The School Council believes that, 'good learners

try hard every day and do not always get everything right!'. One councillor said, 'challenges are mind-testing!'.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff take children's interests into account when planning provision. Staff spot 'in the moment learning', seizing every opportunity to capitalise on children's curiosity. Disadvantaged children make such good progress because bespoke interventions accelerate learning. The aim is that children receive whatever support they need at the time.
- Pupils' current work shows consistently high standards of application of basic skills and rates of progress. Self-pride and eagerness to improve are clearly evident. Pupils demonstrate stamina through extended pieces of writing that are often thrilling to read. Pupils improve their work by making sophisticated responses to teachers' feedback. They are accountable for their progress through self and peer assessment and editing.

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

...all adults consistently provided opportunities for pupils to articulate their responses and opinions in a clear way that reflects their ability, knowledge and confidence.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Pupils enter the school with skills that are significantly lower than what is typically expected, particularly in speech and language. Staff tackle this through planning activities that reinforce the extension of vocabulary. Despite these low starting points, children make strong progress through the EYFS. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) in 2018 was above the national average; this has been sustained over the last three years. This is as a result of high quality teaching and excellent provision that is matched to children's needs. 'Talk Boost' in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 is making a real difference.
- The 2018 phonics screening check shows pupils achieved higher than the previous year, again above the national average, as did those retaking in Year 2. The impact on current Year 2 pupils meant that they were ready to apply spelling patterns in their writing. Thus they are making excellent progress.
- In Key Stage 1 in 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was above the national average in writing and mathematics and in line in reading. Progress from the end of EYFS to the end of Key Stage 1 was broadly in line with the national average for all subjects and particularly strong from such low starting points.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2018, there was a dip from previous years that was cohort-related. The 2018 Year 6 cohort included 41% new arrivals since Year 1, 43% disadvantaged pupils, 28% SEND and 67% EAL. Mathematics and writing results were above national averages at expected level and in reading in line. At

the higher standard, reading was in line with the national average, with mathematics and writing above. At greater depth, mathematics was above, reading in line and writing just below national measures. Grammar, spelling and punctuation results were above the national measure at expected and higher standard.

- In 2018 at the end of Key Stage 2, disadvantaged pupils performed highly in mathematics. Attainment at the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above the national average. This represents exceptional progress.
- Current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve age related expectations and above. Disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress and doing better than others in reading. There is no difference in the quality of books of vulnerable groups and others. Pupils with SEND are receiving the support they need to make good progress. The SENCo, who monitors progress carefully and knows the pupils well, is confident that they are making appropriate progress and staff are addressing those who are making less than expected progress.
- Improvements in the achievement of reading of black African pupils and disadvantaged pupils are impressive. Weekly support from Year 7 pupils are accelerating the reading progress of Year 3 and 4 pupils in these groups.

5. Area of Excellence

None submitted.

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

Leaders have a strong support network.

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.