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**CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report**

<b>Name of School:</b>	<b>Admiral Lord Nelson School</b>
<b>School Address:</b>	Dundas Lane, Portsmouth, PO3 5XT.
<b>Hub:</b>	Mary Rose School

<b>Telephone Number:</b>	02392 364 536
<b>Email address:</b>	admin@alns.co.uk

<b>Unique Reference Number:</b>	140697
<b>Local Authority:</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Type of School:</b>	Secondary
<b>School Category:</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of:</b>	11-16
<b>Number on roll:</b>	1000
<b>Head teacher/Principal:</b>	Nysrene Hardingham

<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	2-3 March 2011 (Previous School)
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good

<b>Date of Quality Assurance Review:</b>	21-23 September 2016
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## **QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES<sup>1</sup>**

<b>School Improvement Strategies:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Outcomes for Pupils is:</b>	Good
<b>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Area of Excellence:</b>	Confirmed and valid for 3 years
<b>SMSC</b>	
<b>Previously accredited Areas of Excellence:</b>	
<b>SMSC</b>	

### **Overall Review Evaluation**

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Admiral Lord Nelson School appears to be at the top of the Good grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted report and is working towards Outstanding.

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 judgments

## Information about the school

- Admiral Lord Nelson School is an average sized secondary school in Portsmouth.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage, with only a small proportion for whom English is an additional language.
- The proportion of students in receipt of pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is broadly in line with national averages.
- The percentage of students who remain at the school throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 is above average.
- The school is not located in an area of high social deprivation.
- The school was recently awarded the Artsmark Platinum award, one of only two schools in the south-east region to gain this accolade.

## School Improvement Strategies

### What Went Well

- The vision and direction of the inspirational headteacher and her dedicated leadership team have established a relentless pursuit of raising the achievement and life chances for every student.
- The School Improvement Plan (SIP) identifies issues with clarity and is rooted within a thorough self-evaluation process, building on progress made since previous Ofsted reports and Challenge Partners reviews. The plan is an effective tool for self-improvement, with strategy documents providing in-depth guidance on the implementation of key systems.
- The school's Self Evaluation Form demonstrates clear awareness of the progress that has been made, and still needs to be made, in order to ensure better outcomes across the key issues. This is updated and reviewed regularly.
- The high expectations that underpin the SIP pervade school life. The senior leadership team and staff model these throughout the school, both through their teaching and their interaction with students outside of lessons.
- The quality of teaching and learning in curriculum areas where students perform least well has shown significant improvement in the last six months. Major factors have been the appointment of a new head of department in science and the effective coaching and development of the head of geography. As a consequence, students' performance in additional science is improving and the progress of students lower down the school is more in line with expectations. For the first time in many years, geography and history now attract approximately equal numbers of students in Year 10. This is a reflection of the improving reputation of geography, as previously, history had attracted substantially higher numbers.

- To further improve outcomes in French and German, the school's leadership team is maintaining smaller class sizes in Year 11, giving more contact to students through an improved teacher-student ratio.
- Literacy and numeracy policies have been effectively integrated into a 'key priorities for exam skills' strategy, published in the school handbook. This strategy is re-visited in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions and is providing a focus for teachers to equip students with the wider learning tools required for examination success.
- The quality of written feedback is improving; staff and students are aware of the systems in place and use them more consistently. Where this is fully adopted, it is beginning to show direct impact on student progress.
- Leaders encourage and enable teachers to take responsibility for the progress of their students through the provision of progress data for each class. They then use the data to identify under-performance, the reasons behind it, and the actions that the teacher will take to close the gap. This efficient and consistent approach across the school enables middle leaders to monitor and quality-assure teacher interventions before key assessments are taken.
- Collaborative moderation within and between departments is improving consistency in target-setting and assessment across the school.
- Attendance strategies are beginning to have an impact; attendance is better than the local average and has shown some improvement on last year. In addition to a multi-agency approach targeted at the most vulnerable students, the school values highly the importance of creating a safe, welcoming but purposeful learning environment where students know they can achieve. This incentive is further supplemented by the effective use of assemblies to remind students of the importance of attendance and through access to LEA initiatives, such as the Capital Radio concert lottery for high attending students.
- The focus on behaviour for learning since the last Challenge Partners review has enabled the school to create a positive learning environment, based on mutual respect and a common goal: to learn. This has been adopted and integrated into school life in an impressively short time. Students speak favourably of the behaviour policy and understand that behaviour for learning is a non-negotiable expectation and not simply a target to which they must strive. Robust systems ensure that staff feel supported by senior leaders whilst maintaining full responsibility for the behaviour for the learning climate in their rooms.
- The capacity for school improvement is enhanced by the recruitment of, and investment in, skilled middle leaders. They benefit from middle leadership training and, during their first term in the role, being coached by a senior leader who is not their line manager. Heads of department commented that the senior leaders are always approachable and make themselves available when support is needed. This allows them to act quickly to maintain and improve standards in their departments.

- The focus on strengthening leadership capacity across the school is securing an effective grass roots leadership dynamic. This is demonstrated by teachers at all levels of the hierarchy leading professional learning sessions for the whole staff. As a result, a sustainable model of school leadership is well-developed.

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

...the leadership team continued to monitor and quality assure the new strategies to ensure that there is a measurable impact on outcomes.

...senior and middle leaders continued to review and evaluate closely the impact of all strategies in every department to ensure consistency across the whole school.

### **Pupil Outcomes**

- In 2016, the school achieved 58% A\*-C including English and mathematics, remaining above last year's national average. Although this was lower than the 2015 result of 64%, the year group included sixteen vulnerable students whose performance impacted on the overall results.
- Expected progress in English is well above last year's national average at 80% and students making more than expected progress has rapidly increased to 50%. Although expected progress in mathematics has declined from 69% to 63%, students making more than expected progress has increased. Steps have already been taken to address this issue in mathematics. Predictions for 2017 show a further increase in expected levels of progress for English to 87% and a significant increase in mathematics to 83%.
- The percentage of students achieving the English Baccalaureate is increasing, with a challenging target set for 2017.
- Departments performing below national averages are already beginning to show improvement in students' progress as a result of detailed action plans for 2016/17.
- Pupil premium gaps reduced in 2015 and again in 2016 for 3 levels of progress in mathematics and the Progress 8 measure. However, the gap increased in 5 A\*-C including English and mathematics and the percentage achieving expected levels of progress in English. This still reflects an improvement on 2014 but once again, the sizeable number of vulnerable students negatively affected this measure. Individually, those students each gained some measure of personal success but it was not sufficient to impact positively on the school's overall data.
- The school monitors very closely the progress of all students in all year groups, having recently introduced a new system. Staff now demonstrate greater accountability because their appraisal targets link to the progress of students across all year groups.
- Rigorous monitoring, both by Heads of Department and the Leadership Team six times a year, ensures that students who are not making expected progress are

quickly identified. Targeted interventions ensure students are rapidly back on track to make at least expected progress. This academic year, the senior leadership team is ensuring that equal rigour spans all year groups by adopting a more holistic approach to progress and attainment. Even at this early stage in the term, students are working harder and being challenged more, leading to stronger outcomes in all year groups through more rigorous monitoring.

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

### **What Went Well**

- Teaching and learning are highly effective across the school as a result of the professional learning sessions and the CPD that has been embedded to support teachers' knowledge and understanding.
- The positive relationships between staff and students promotes a highly effective learning environment. Students are confident in their working practices and are not afraid to make mistakes due to the nurturing and stimulating surroundings.
- Behaviour for learning is a real strength in lessons because teachers have high expectations of their students who rise to this challenge, resulting in greater progress for all. Students are intensely proud of their school. They wear their uniform immaculately and the litter-free buildings and premises give a clear indication of how they look after their school.
- Assessment information is used effectively across the school to guide planning. Teachers take effective responsibility for the progress of their groups, resulting in improving outcomes.
- In the most effective lessons, students make positive progress through the skilful differentiation of tasks, high levels of engagement and the opportunities they are given for independent learning.
- Questioning is used effectively to develop students' understanding based on Bloom's Taxonomy model. This is supporting deeper thinking, promoting greater understanding and leading to improved progress.
- Leaders have invested a great deal of time in the development of a coherent and consistent marking and feedback policy. This is having a clear impact on learning. Students are able to comment accurately on what they need to do to improve their work in response to the teacher's guidance.
- Vulnerable students are making improved progress due to 'quality-first' teaching, in addition to the individual support they receive in class. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to promote independence.
- Where progress is more rapid, challenge is pitched appropriately. This is evidenced through the increased use of assessment tools and deeper, extended questioning that stimulates students' thinking and thus accelerates learning.

- Where the best teaching and learning takes place, this can be directly attributed to the middle leaders who have been the driving force to improve this aspect, largely through the impact of training and opportunities for professional development they have received.

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

...teachers embedded more specific responses to feedback in both classwork and homework so that students have precise next steps.

...leaders fully embedded strategies, such as increased modelling and scaffolding, to challenge all students to improve outcomes and further narrow any existing gaps.

...leaders implemented additional standardised assessments to assist teachers in predicting students' progress more accurately.

## **Quality of Area of Excellence**

### **SMSC**

SMSC has been requested for re-validation on this QA review – it had been identified and confirmed on the last review but the school has extended its philosophy on this area since then.

Through a variety of ways, SMSC has a profound impact upon every individual student in the school. Feedback after Personal Development days shows that students have strong global awareness and independent thinking. They are happy to voice their opinions and listen to the views of others.

The school is fully inclusive and has had no permanent exclusions for over ten years. This inclusivity is evident in the Broadside Intervention Centre, Katrina's Garden, a student charter and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles everywhere in the school. For a school where the vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds, teachers go to extraordinary lengths to ensure there is a rich diet of learning based on other communities, cultures and faiths.

SMSC is mapped across every subject within the curriculum and throughout extra curricular activities. Evidence of effective SMSC is everywhere; one student remarked "It is just what we do!" The ethos of the school encompasses tolerance and inclusion. Another student added, "It is now cool to succeed, cool to be involved and even cool to be in the garden club!" SMSC is very strong in the performance subjects of PE, dance, drama and music and there is a requirement that every student must take part in at least one performance club. The school has held the Artsmark Gold award for fourteen years and last year became one of only two schools in the south of England to gain the brand new Artsmark Platinum award.

The new Behaviour for Learning policy came from the student charter and was developed with the students' full involvement. It is all about choice and consequence, therefore fitting completely with the school's ethos of student rights. In one lesson, a student turned to

another who was talking over the teacher and said, “You are stopping my right to an education!”

Admiral Lord Nelson School has exemplary SMSC, with it permeating every single aspect of the school. It is with this in mind that the review team has great pleasure in re-affirming SMSC as an Area of Excellence.

**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...modern foreign languages.

**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.**