

Name of School:	Drumbeat School and ASD Service
Executive head teacher:	Marie Neave
Hub:	London Special and AP
School type:	Community Special

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	07/12/2018
Estimate at last QA Review	OUTSTANDING
Date of last QA Review	22/03/2017 The planned March 2018 review was postponed as it coincided with the school's inspection.
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	GOOD (Inspectors noted the next inspection would be a Section 5, indicating the school 'may be improving towards being outstanding').
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	23/03/2018

Quality Assurance Review

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

School Improvement Strategies	OUTSTANDING
Outcomes for Pupils	GOOD
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	OUTSTANDING
Area of Excellence	Not submitted this year
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Behaviour systems to support autistic pupils. 22/03/17
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

- Drumbeat School is a mixed special school for pupils aged 4–19. Pupils have been diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- The school opened in 2012. It is housed in excellent purpose-built accommodation.
- There are 182 pupils on roll. The school is split over two sites, about five miles apart. One has 116 pupils up to Key Stage 3 and the second site has 66 pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5.
- The school runs an outreach service which supports pupils with ASD in schools across the Borough of Lewisham, which 85% of schools buy into. The service was previously provided by the Borough. The outreach service was not part of this review.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher who shares her time across the two sites. A deputy headteacher is based at each school. In addition there are two assistant head teachers and a school business director.
- The school provides extended services covering holiday clubs and after school provision. These include a variety of activities like art, sport and cooking. They also provide transport home. The holiday club provides a daily curriculum and educational trips for all pupils who attend.
- Three quarters of the pupils are boys. 50% are disadvantaged and are in receipt of pupil premium.
- The school's vision is that pupils will leave Drumbeat as independent, confident, caring, ambitious, courageous, safe, respectful, resilient and successful young people.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- The quality of support provided outside the classroom has been improved. A teaching assistant now leads on playground activities and training has been provided for others. Activities, such as Aeroball and trampolining, have been added.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- The senior team provides a cohesive drive for school improvement based on a shared ambition to achieve excellence.
- The recent restructure has led to a greater clarity of roles and development of a

more strategic and consistent approach across the two sites. This is achieved through a range of whole school events, as well as key staff, such as therapists and some Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), working at both sites. Leaders' judgments about the quality of teaching and learning are moderated. Each site uses the same assessment tools, symbols and approaches.

- Accountability has also been increased. Leaders have made more explicit what the school expects of those teachers on the upper pay scales (UPS), for example.
- The school is skilfully developing the next tier of leadership. Key stage coordinators have an increasingly strong grasp of the strengths and areas for development of their respective areas.
- The school has an impressive range of training opportunities for staff, which is enriched by hosting the outreach service. School practitioners run weekly training sessions. All staff are trained in Team Teach, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and have Level 2 qualifications from the Autism Education Trust. One deputy has completed National Professional Qualification for Headship. All middle leaders have completed the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders and other in house training.
- The school has strong systems in place to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders are accurate in their judgments when observing lessons. Teachers are given clear suggestions, gleaned from a cycle of observations and learning walks, for how to improve their professional practice.
- The school uses the Lesson Study method - a structured approach where teachers work collaboratively in triads to review and develop each other's practice. For example, a focus on strategies for the sensory classes has led to improvements in mathematics for those pupils who are non-verbal.
- The large team of teaching assistants (TAs) are well managed. A TA charter, that makes expectations clear, has been agreed across the school and development pathways for them are available. Seven TAs have been appointed to the role of HLTA and six hold responsibilities across a key stage for deployment and day-to-day management of the other TAs. Others lead on areas such as drama, Art, Lego Therapy and work experience. Teachers retain control of performance management of their TA teams.
- The curriculum has been much improved and provides variety and challenge. It is structured around three pathways, each clearly mapped, from Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) through to Key Stage 5. It provides flexibility for pupils to move between the pathways as each class teaches each pathway. The Key Stage 5 curriculum adopts a functional approach (skills for life) based around ASDAN which enables easy moderation.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...the school further developed the skills of the key stage leaders, to evaluate the

quality of the provision in their respective areas and plan developments with success criteria that are clearly linked to each action.

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

- The quality of questioning has improved and this has been monitored through a range of observations and learning walks.
- Visual supports are used more consistently to promote task engagement and independent learning. The school wants to retain this as a focus and plans to do further work and training, especially for the significant number of new staff.

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

- The quality of teaching is consistently strong across the school with some exceptional practice.
- The school is in the process of moving to a new assessment system after a period of researching various options. This new assessment framework is being well used by staff to pitch their lessons at the right level and accurately capture progress pupils are making. It also allows staff to make judgments across a wide range of subjects and skills. Target setting is effective and challenging.
- Planning is concise and reflects the pupils' personal plans. Tasks for different abilities are carefully planned. Teachers are given regular time to plan collaboratively with their teams. As a result, TAs know what they need to do and what the pupils need to learn.
- Feedback to pupils from staff is clear. Indeed, the school is participating in a research project with University College London and with two other schools which focuses on effective feedback. Staff are confident to let pupils make mistakes and help them learn from these experiences.
- Pupils of all abilities are well challenged. Extension tasks are planned and used. For example, this was seen during a lesson where pupils made seasonal decorations. In another class, pupils were able to 'be the teacher' in a work experience session.
- The TA team are particularly skilled. Teachers deploy them well. There is a strong sense of seamless teamwork. TAs understand that a key part of their role is to develop pupils' independence skills and they do this well.
- Teachers focus on the development of pupils' social and communication skills throughout lessons using a range of interventions such as Makaton, PECs and symbols. These are consistently used well in classrooms.
- Questioning is well used to both extend pupils' learning and check for understanding.
- An extensive range of ASD specific strategies and interventions are in place and

staff are skilled in using them. For example, staff use Social Communication Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports (SCERTS) effectively as well as colourful semantics, Teach workstations, attention autism and a 'split teaching model' where pupils of different abilities work in groups. This maximises learning and reduces the time pupils spend waiting.

- Staff work hard to help pupils generalise their knowledge to other environments. For example, an instructions task in Key Stage 5 was extended towards making a bed.
- The school is committed to a multi-disciplinary approach. The school employs its own therapists to supplement those provided by health services. They also employ a behaviour counsellor and clinical psychologist who specialises in ASD. Both work directly with pupils and their families. For example, a Child and Mental Health Service clinic held in the school provides more rapid access for parents and families.

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

- ...staff made more consistent use of signs and symbols, particularly when supporting individual pupils outside the classroom
- ...the school embedded its new assessment system, including 'The Drumbeat Levels', so that it can accurately capture the progress that pupils make in all aspects of their learning.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- The school is in transition between its previous and new systems for measuring progress. The analysis from summer 2018 relies on Comparison and Analysis of Special Pupil Attainment (CASPA). From September 2018, this will be replaced by SOLAR for Schools.
- The school has worked hard to prepare for this change. It will enable leaders to make useful comparisons with progress made by other pupils in special schools in Lewisham, as well as capture a wider range of outcomes.
- There is no significant difference in the progress made by the large number of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), progress is strong with the small number of girls (two) making particularly strong progress. Over the whole class, gains are most significant in making relationships and self-confidence/self-awareness within the Development Matters curriculum.
- Across Key Stages 1 and 2, progress was also strong. The school uses the 'old' system for the bulk of the pupils and has developed a more bespoke assessment approach. This covers, for example, emotion regulation and independence for those pupils with the most complex ASD.

- Progress in reading and computing were particularly strong as was the progress of the girls across all learning areas during the year 2017-18. Progress was weakest in mathematics, which the school is addressing.
- In Key Stage 3, progress is strong. Last year, nearly all pupils made expected or above expected progress with particular strengths in computing and writing. In this key stage, outcomes for boys and girls were similar, with boys outperforming girls in speaking and listening.
- In Key Stage 4, there are particular strengths in reading, speaking and listening and computing. Progress in mathematics and writing is slower. Boys do particularly well.
- In Key Stage 5, from September 2018, progress is being accredited through the ASDAN framework at bronze, silver and gold level. Outcomes analysis for summer 2018 indicated strong progress in core skills, where 28 out of 30 pupils met or exceeded their targets. All leavers from the summer have secured and sustained a college placement. There is a good personalised approach to showing progress. For example, five pupils now travel independently to and from school. 15 pupils achieved a bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award while 11 have completed a media course at Bromley College. There are ambitious work experience opportunities, including working in a café in Lewisham.
- The SCERTS assessments indicate strong progress across all three key areas.

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

The school is an experienced member of the Challenge Partners network and will pursue the support that they need directly, for example in moderating outcomes.

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.