



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	St John Fisher Catholic Primary School
Headteacher/Principal:	Claire Lewis
Hub:	Aspire
School phase:	Primary (Voluntary Aided)
MAT (if applicable):	N/A

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	N/A
Date of this Review:	03/07/2023
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Effective
Date of last QA Review	16/05/2022
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	09/06/2021



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Quality Assurance Review

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

Leadership at all levels N/A

Quality of provision and outcomes N/A

AND

**Quality of provision and
outcomes for disadvantaged
pupils and pupils with additional
needs**

Area of excellence N/A

**Previously accredited valid areas
of excellence** 'Driving culture and curriculum
through your vision' 11/03/2020

Overall peer evaluation estimate N/A

***The Quality Assurance Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades.
The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is
developmental not judgmental.***

1. Context and character of the school

St John Fisher is a one-form entry Catholic voluntary-aided primary school. The 30 place Nursery opened in January 2019, offering flexible provision.

Situated in Knowsley Village, Merseyside, St John Fisher is part of the Southern Area Schools (SAS) network in Knowsley. It has close links with the parish of St Columba and St John Fisher and the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Leaders support other schools in a variety of areas, including developing a school vision, mathematics and well-being. The school is a UNICEF silver 'Rights Respecting School' and specialist teaching is provided for science, music, computing and French.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils has historically been low but is moving closer towards the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is slightly above average. However, although increasing, the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school vision, 'to create a school community where children and adults achieve their full potential and SHINE!' is at the heart of everything at St John Fisher. It is achieved through 'engagement', 'high expectations', and by treating all with 'respect' and 'dignity'. This vision is interwoven throughout the curriculum, lived out in daily life and underpinned by the strong Catholic ethos. The headteacher took up post in April 2022 and the deputy headteacher is a recent internal appointment.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The headteacher leads with passion and pride, achieving a positive culture shift in the short time she has been in post. Together, she and the deputy headteacher are taking the staff with them on an ambitious journey where pupils are at the heart of all decision-making.
- Relationships at all levels are trusting and caring. This results in mutual respect within a climate of openness and honesty.
- Senior leaders are implementing a new leadership structure to create more teams, based on staff interest and expertise. Developments include a new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) leader, phonics leader, environmental team, community team, phase teams, Shine teams and Little Leaders. This is aimed at creating more collaboration and shared accountability.

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- The headteacher is achieving alignment between the vision, curriculum, development planning and pedagogy. This is as a result of thorough self-evaluation and frequent, supportive monitoring. Documentation has been streamlined to keep impact and meaning at the forefront of any changes.
- The phonics leader, who is a moderator for Knowsley, is seeing the impact of her support and challenge, such as the sessions she has modelled to teach the precise steps in the speed sounds. Phonics groups are fluid which ensures that pupils' needs are always met through meticulous assessment and monitoring by the leader. Consequently, outcomes are improving.
- Personal development underpins everything, supported by the Life Skills curriculum. Well embedded learning powers begin in the EYFS. Restorative practice and coaching create a 'can do' approach where pupils develop self-awareness of their emotions and opinions.
- Personal development underpins everything, supported by the Life Skills curriculum. 'Shine' is interwoven as a golden thread throughout the fabric of the school. A Shine Board at the front of each class has two targets linked to the learning powers. Staff celebrate how pupils shine out of school, and their achievements, such as becoming a 'sixer' or being chosen for a sports team, are celebrated during assemblies. Staff consider pupils' talents and interests when planning lessons. For example, a Year 6 pupil proudly spoke of her aspiration to become a fashion designer after being inspired by a visit from Kirsty Doyle, a local dress shop owner.
- The curriculum is constantly reviewed; three related experiences a year enhance pupils' cultural capital, for example a visit to Weaver Hall. Leaders added The Slave Trade to the history curriculum because it is such an important part of Liverpool's history. Twig Science and Picture News help pupils to make connections with real life, such as learning about volcanos over time. The whole school curriculum is adaptive and progressive, and aligned to the school's vision and purpose.
- Subject leaders are driving their subjects as a result of being trusted, having quality time and valuable continuous professional development (CPD). They clearly articulate impact and next steps.
- Sport is a key strength, demonstrated by the gold kite mark. Pupils unanimously cited 'all the sporting opportunities' as a special part of their school.

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

- ... all history learning objectives were clear, purposeful and specific so that the appropriate outcomes are achieved.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes and are eager to share their learning and support each other. This is because there is an upbeat climate for learning where they are all expected to shine. Pupils value the Shine tokens that they receive as rewards, as part of the consistently embedded Shine strategy. This includes pupils responding immediately to the teachers' '1-2-3 Shine!' instruction, successfully demonstrating positive learning behaviours including eye contact, enthusiasm, motivation and engagement. Pupils can articulate their learning journey and talk about the school blogs with confidence.
- The reading spine encourages pupils to read for pleasure and enjoy the 'read to write' journey. All books are linked to the curriculum and diversity. A lot of work on the reading curriculum has included decoding, expanding, retrieval, inference and consolidation. The clear structure includes objectives and questions at each level. Thus pupils make good progress.
- Routines are very well established throughout the school, shown in the EYFS where children know what is expected and engage well. Another example is the 'overlearn' strategy which is now well-embedded and successful in retrieving prior knowledge. One pupil said, 'Overlearn helps me to remember what I've learned before because our lessons are linked.' Consistency of the learning environment is helping to show the learning journey. These routines are increasing the consistency of behavioural and learning expectations.
- Secure staff subject knowledge enables pupils to make good progress. This is as a result of beneficial and timely CPD.
- Varied opportunities for speaking and listening develop pupils' vocabulary, including paired and group discussions. For example, stem sentences are extending pupils' vocabulary. This helps pupils to build a progressive sequence of subject-specific terminology that deepens their learning and increases their attainment. Respectful talk is a key feature of lessons, enabling pupils to build on other pupils' responses: 'I'd like to add to that' and 'I completely agree with you because...'
- Where skilful questioning is targeted, misconceptions are addressed at the point of learning and pupils are challenged to think deeply to reinforce and apply their understanding.
- Teaching assistants (TAs) know their pupils very well. This enables them to aim their support and challenge appropriately by asking targeted questions that enable pupils to work as independently as possible.

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- Behaviours for learning such as independence and perseverance enable pupils to continue the flow of their learning without wasting any time. They have a secure understanding of what to do when work becomes a challenge, using the classroom environment as a helpful resource. Pupils said that the working walls, the learning powers, shine, resources such as a thesaurus and looking back at previous work, all give them useful prompts to solve problems and apply their knowledge.
- Pupils' books show evidence of challenge, particularly in science and history, where questions are posed to promote deeper thinking. The use of 'CPOW' (connectives, punctuation, openers, wow words) and 'grammar-up' is consistent where pupils' writing shows evidence of editing, re-drafting and revising the learning power.
- Pupils spoke confidently about the personal qualities and skills their leadership responsibilities are developing in them, such as play leaders, reading treasures, shining lights and sports coaches. They said, 'We are developing responsibility, motivation, respect, inspiring younger pupils, being a good role model, confidence and perseverance.' They are immensely proud of their school.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

- ... all staff seized all opportunities as they arise during the lesson for all pupils to collaborate and articulate their thinking.
- ... there were more opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills in extended pieces of writing in order to showcase the high quality of their work.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- Provision is extremely well led because the headteacher has held the SENDCo role this year. She knows every pupil and every family extremely well, having built trusting relationships between home and school, as well as external agencies. There are equally high expectations for pupils with additional needs as any other pupil; it is difficult to spot them in class.
- There are clear systems in place that enable pupils with additional needs to be identified early. The inclusion team is clearly very skilled and passionate and, therefore, has a strong vision for the future.

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- The inclusive culture enables all pupils, including those with an EHCP, to access the full curriculum offer and feel truly valued. For example the pride on one pupil's face was heart-warming when she realised her teacher had photographed her work to benefit the rest of the class.
- Teaching assistants and all support staff are valued members of the teaching team. They demonstrate good practice due to relevant CPD, on-going support and liaison with class teachers. One example is the high standard of writing produced by a pupil with complex needs, as a result of individual support from the TA to incorporate 'CPOW' using a computer.
- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils, including the most vulnerable, are positive. This is due to the high expectations and constant reinforcement from all staff. Similarly, learning behaviours are improving, helped by the consistency of routines.
- There are positive levels of parental engagement across the school. Communication between home and school is timely and effective so parents are well informed about the progress of their child and how they can support at home.
- Leaders can articulate how the systems and structures are evident in everyday school life. Subject leaders plan and incorporate ways to adapt their curriculum so that pupils with additional needs can progress well. A wealth of interventions is matched to meet pupils' bespoke needs, for example speech and language interventions. Personalised priorities and adaptations are planned and robust review meetings discuss and evaluate progress. Rigorous monitoring ensures that the smallest steps of pupils' progress are recorded and acted upon.
- The lowest 20% of pupils read every day and receive interventions to close knowledge gaps. This daily practice is helping pupils to keep up.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

- ... all staff seized all opportunities as they arise during the lesson for all disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs to collaborate and articulate their thinking.
- ... there were more opportunities for disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs to apply their knowledge and skills in extended pieces of writing in order to showcase the high quality of their writing.



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5. Area of Excellence

N/A

Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, we encourage you to share the main findings with your hub/hub manager so that they can support your hub's activity planning. Challenge Partners will also collate and analyse report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.

For further support following your QA Review, schools can access the School Support Directory; the Challenge Partners online tool that enables schools to connect with other schools in your hub and across the national network of schools.

Schools can also attend Sharing Leading Practice (SLP) events where schools showcase excellent and/or innovative practice. Sharing Leading Practice events allow school leaders with specific improvement needs to visit a school or attend an online webinar hosted by a school, with outstanding provision in that area.

Both the School Support Directory and the Shared Leading Practice events can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website. (<https://www.challengepartners.org/>)

Finally, following the QA Review, schools may find it useful to refer to research such as the EEF toolkit to help inform their approach to tackling the EBIs identified in the report (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>)