



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
ISLEWORTH AND SYON SCHOOL

Name of School:	Isleworth and Syon
Head teacher/Principal:	Euan Ferguson
Hub:	London West
School type:	Secondary Converter Academy
MAT (if applicable):	

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	12/12/2018
Estimate at last QA Review	OUTSTANDING
Date of last QA Review	29/11/2017
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	GOOD
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	07/02/2017

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 Maximising Boys' Progress at Key Stage 4 (English Language and Literature)	ACCREDITED
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Leading a highly effective science department at Key Stage 4 29/11/2017 Initial Teacher Training and Newly Qualified Teacher Induction 16/11/2016
Overall Estimate	OUTSTANDING

An extensive review of sixth form provision has recently taken place as part of a borough-wide initiative. The school requested that this quality assurance review should focus only on Key Stages 3 and 4.

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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

- The school is an average-sized secondary boys school with about 180 students in the sixth form. Sixth form students are taught within a consortium. Girls are invited to join in the sixth form. A new teaching block was opened in September 2018.
- The school celebrates its long history which dates back to 1630, but is forward-looking with a sharp focus on continuous improvement. It is a member of a number of partnerships including the London West Alliance and the Hounslow Education Partnership. It was a founding member of Challenge Partners. It manages the Sports Impact organisation which contributes to sport and physical education across the local authority. It is a member of the Leading Edge partnership of schools and is designated as a national Leadership Academy.
- The majority of students come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group is White British.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion with an education and health care plan is below average.
- The proportion of students who do not speak English as their first language is well above average. The proportion of disadvantaged students is also well above average.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- Amendments have been made to Key Stage 3 assessment procedures since the last quality assurance review. Students are banded into five broad bands according to GCSE predictions. They are assessed three times a year on their progress within these bands. Teachers also report on the students' attitude to learning. The changes to assessment and reporting have been well received by parents.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- There is a culture of high aspiration. Leaders and teachers are very ambitious for the school and for the students, and work together to ensure that students have the best possible opportunities.
- Success is celebrated. Within the school, students are praised for their achievements in all aspects of school life. Displays in the main corridors highlight the many successes of past students from the school. These include academic and sporting successes and achievements in the performing arts.
- The school's strong ethos and values permeate all aspects of school life and underpin the improvements in outcomes. Leaders are developing a further articulation of these in the *Isleworth and Syon Way*. This aims to establish a strong identity for each phase of the school journey from inductee to alumnus, and to make the expectations of every student absolutely clear.
- There is a collaborative approach to school improvement and staff development. All members of staff are members of a SIG (school improvement group). Middle leaders take part in various projects within the borough and beyond. Experienced staff are encouraged to continue their learning through study for further qualifications, and to become examiners or moderators in their subjects. Staff at all levels work together with the aim of continuous improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. There is extensive reflection and sharing of best practice. There is a strategic approach to recruitment and training of high quality staff through a number of routes. Staff development is linked to succession planning within the school.
- Leaders know their school very well and self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. The school development priorities are known and understood by all staff, who work together to implement strategies. As a result, the school has been successful in focusing on particular areas for improvement. An example is the sharp improvement in outcomes in English. These were achieved by a focused response to the challenge to improve progress in English identified at the last Ofsted inspection.
- The curriculum is kept under close review and made relevant to the needs and interests of the students. The school aims to give students a broad and rich cultural and educational experience and there are numerous extra-curricular activities, trips and visits which contribute to the strong spiritual, moral social and cultural development of the boys.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...leaders and teachers continued to support all students to make outstanding progress by further developing and embedding the *Isleworth and Syon Way*.

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

- Some examples of highly effective questioning were seen during the review, with teachers asking targeted and probing questions to develop thinking. For example, in a Year 9 PSHE lesson, students were asked open questions about their ideas and pre-conceptions. Their responses were challenged through demanding questions which made them think more deeply.
- The development of questioning is a continuing focus through the teaching and learning school improvement group. The school is aware that although many teachers are now questioning very effectively, some variability in practice remains.

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

- Teachers have very high expectations of students, and students expect to learn and to work hard. The message 'Think Hard, Work Hard' is reflected throughout the school. Relationships in the classroom between students and between students and adults are excellent. Students are very appreciative of all the extra effort teachers make to help them to achieve both within and beyond the classroom. Because they are encouraged and supported they are not afraid to make mistakes and to learn from them.
- Teachers plan lessons which motivate and engage the students. Well-established routines help to ensure that in lessons the students are sharply focused on learning and can make good progress. Students enjoy learning and take pride in their work. Their books provide a good record of what they have learned. For example, in a Year 10 engineering class the learning from practical activities was clearly recorded to aid revision.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They are very aware of the examination criteria and teach examination skills throughout the school. In a Year 10 Geography lesson, the language used helped the students to become familiar with the new specifications. In a computer science lesson, the students used assessment criteria to improve their work.
- Teachers circulate continuously in lessons giving precise individual feedback. Students have personal learning checklists (PLCs) for all of their subjects at Key Stage 4. This helps them to organise their work and prioritise revision.
- When students are given opportunities to discuss their work they do so sensibly and purposefully and learn from each other. They are encouraged to develop their use of vocabulary and technical terms so that they can communicate clearly and precisely. In a Year 8 English lesson, students worked together through a series of activities which helped them focus on aspects of their writing. They then used this learning to confidently redraft a written assessment.

- Effective modelling was seen in many lessons. In a Year 9 geography lesson, the teacher used model answers to help the students to understand how to achieve well and use key technical terms.

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

...the school developed the work already being done to ensure that students have more opportunities to lead learning in the classroom.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- Students in last year's Year 11 entered the school with levels of prior attainment which were below the national average. This picture has been changing over time, with fewer students entering the school with low prior attainment and more with high prior attainment. The average attainment on entry for students currently in the school is above the national average.
- Overall, in 2018 students made progress which was above average for all students and well above for boys. Attainment overall was above the national average. Students made excellent progress in English and mathematics, and the proportions achieving a 'standard' and a 'strong' pass in English and mathematics were well above average. Progress was also excellent in science, humanities and languages. Progress in some of the other subjects in the 'open' element of the GCSE was less strong. Leaders have introduced initiatives to address this.
- Students who entered the school with low prior attainment made exceptional progress in 2018. Disadvantaged students made very strong progress when compared with other students nationally. The progress made by students with high prior attainment improved significantly in 2018. A range of whole school initiatives have contributed to this.
- Students for whom English is an additional language perform very well from their different starting points, thanks to the support provided by the school.
- Students make very good progress through the key stages thanks to consistently good teaching and targeted support for those that are identified as falling behind.
- Students read widely and often, and the school makes very effective use of 'accelerated reader' to promote this. Students are highly articulate and enjoy the many opportunities to discuss their ideas and their learning, and to debate, for example in the debating society.
- Students are very well prepared for their next steps in education or employment thanks to a developmental focus on careers education, information advice and guidance. Year 10 students all have the opportunity to undertake work experience.

- A very detailed and comprehensive review of sixth form provision has recently taken place and the school therefore did not wish this to be included as part of this quality assurance review. The sixth form review and school self-evaluation find that outcomes in the sixth form in 2018 were good overall.

5. Area of Excellence

Maximising Boys' Progress at Key Stage 4 (English Language and Literature)

Accredited.

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

The leadership of the English team is outstanding. There is a clear vision for excellence. Leaders are excellent role models in the classroom. Low staff turnover and a history of retaining staff indicates a strong collaborative culture within the English team. There is an outward looking approach to recruiting specialist, highly skilled teachers. Achievement in English has improved rapidly over the last three years. Among the successful strategies are:

- The use of Accelerated Reader to drive whole school literacy
The development of the spiral curriculum in Key Stage 3 to prepare students for Key Stage 4 and secure rapid progress
- The development of a consistent approach in order to accelerate progress and raise standards, including collaborative planning, modelling, and consistent structures such as essay writing.
- The development of an engaging curriculum and bespoke resources and assessment.
- A strategic approach to the use of data, including the development of trackers and following up on identified areas for development.

5.2 What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

Good practice is proactively shared through IT systems and is celebrated by leaders as well as by colleagues in face-to-face meetings. Experienced mentors model outstanding practices and support new colleagues. This includes the *ready, steady, teach* approach to planning, which incorporates the development of bespoke resources carefully tailored to the needs of boys. Leaders and mentors provide a plethora of specialist sessions within the continual professional development programme. Support has been provided to a number of other schools in the local authority, and the department has taken part in an English peer review. The curriculum leader is the A level subject leader for the borough.

5.3 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

Progress and attainment are both significantly above the national average. Both have improved rapidly over a three-year trend.

The proportions of students achieving a standard and secure pass in both English and English Literature are much higher than the national average for boys.

The proportion of students attaining at Grade 7 and above in English literature has sharply increased since 2017 and also increased in English language. Both are well above the national figure for boys.

5.4 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Name: Simon Fisher

Title: deputy headteacher

Email: sfisher@isleworthsyon.org

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

The school does not require any further support at this point.

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.