



Alexandra

Primary School

Aspire, Perform, Succeed

Alexandra Primary School

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The role of the Quality Assurance policy is to ensure all pupils receive a high Quality education throughout their time in school. As a member of Collabor8, this responsibility extends to the pupils in all member schools.

Aims

- To ensure that all pupils receive a high standard of education that meets or exceeds the needs and expectations of stakeholders – pupils, parents, staff...
- The standard of education provided and the methods used will be consistent and effective throughout the school and have at their core the values of raising the aspirations and achievement of all pupils.
- The school will provide a clear structure for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing standards across the school.

All members of staff have a responsibility for ensuring pupils receive an education of the highest quality. Some staff have specific roles and responsibilities for aspects of quality assurance.

GOVERNORS

“We need school governors to focus on strategic issues. Chairs of Governors, working with their heads, need to provide the governing body with the right information to focus on what matters”.

Sir Michael Wilshaw,
HMCI, 2012

The Governing body is expected to hold the school to account for both its statutory and non-statutory obligations. Within this, the role of quality assurance is to inform the governing body about the performance of the school including strengths and areas for development. This enables the school to fully participate in the strategic thinking and planning in school. Governors are informed of the outcomes of quality assurance through reports to the full governing body and committees.

The role of governors includes:

- to ensure a clarity of vision, ethos and strategic development direction
- to contribute to the school’s self-evaluation in order to understand its strengths and weaknesses (including the impact of their own work)
- to support the headteacher and strengthen leadership across the school
- to ensure the school is adequately developing the role of middle leaders as part of the school’s strategy for school improvement
- to provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils’ achievement and pupils’ behaviour and safety (including using the data dashboard and other progress data)
- to use performance management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- to ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- to operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities are approved
- to engage with key stakeholders including obtaining their views of the school
- to use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
- to contribute towards school improvement in the local or wider area

In carrying out their role, governors may consider the following questions:

- (1) what is our understanding of the role of the GB?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (2) how effectively do we support the head in setting the vision, values and priorities?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?

- (3) how effectively do we support and challenge school leaders?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (4) what do we know about the progress and achievement of the pupils?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (5) what do we know about the quality of teaching and learning in the school?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (6) what has been the impact of the pupil premium?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (7) how effective is performance management in improving teaching?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (8) what impact is the sports premium having on pupils' well-being?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (9) what is the impact of professional development on teaching and learning?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (10) what do the parents/carers, pupils and staff think of the school?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (11) how effectively does the school work in partnership with other schools?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (12) how do we know that statutory duties are met?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (13) how does our salary profile compare to the average similar school?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?
- (14) how do we know the school finances are managed properly?
 - what is currently done / what more, if anything, needs to be done and by whom?

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

It is vital that the SLT is working together, know and keep updated on the key issues and priorities for the school.

The Headteacher is accountable to the governors for ensuring that all areas of the school are engaged in systematic and rigorous quality assurance and self-evaluation.

Each member of SLT is accountable to the headteacher for the QA in the areas for which they have strategic responsibility.

The outcomes of school evaluation together with external evaluations will be used to identify areas of strength and area for development in order to plan for future school improvement.

All senior leaders and managers will be involved in / contribute to the SEF and will be able to:

- expand on the **significant strengths and weaknesses** of the school
- clarify progress over the past two years or since the last inspection
- detail the evidence that supports statements in the SEF, especially concerning the quality of teaching and learning and pupil progress
- discuss the main aids/barriers to school improvement and to be able to discuss how the school meets the criteria for capacity to improve

Senior leaders will be involved with and consider:

- **the major priorities** for the school and what it most needs to do to move forward - and to see how these relate to the main priorities identified in the SEF and the School Improvement Plan
- the extent to which staff are committed to the vision and ambition of leaders and governors
- the school's approach to establishing accurate base-line data in order to agree an on-entry judgement and as a basis for monitoring progress
- the main strands in the school's strategy **to improve teaching – is there a consistent vision of what 'good/outstanding teaching' looks like?**
- how they monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching and pupils' attitudes to learning within lessons and over time. This should include classroom observations, work in books, assessment information, learning walks and discussions with pupils.
- how **classroom monitoring** informs the school's constant improvement – look for evidence that monitoring has had an impact on the quality of the school's effectiveness. How is this process quality assured both internally and externally, for example by external advisers?
- how effective and robust is performance management including the extent to which the school takes account of the 'Teachers' Standards'?
- how well the school meets the needs of all groups of pupils including the most able, SEN, PPG, and what the school does to narrow the gap within groups, e.g. B/G, EAL and non-EAL
- the use and understanding of data for the identification of issues.
- how professional development has improved teachers and the quality of teaching
- how well leaders promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils

- how staff are involved in decision making and how staff views are taken into account
- how well the school uses primary school sport funding to improve the quality and breadth of PE and how the funding is used and the nature of the baseline against which the impact of the evidence is evaluated
- how the GB are kept informed of progress against school priorities - how the SLT encourages and supports their constructive involvement in the school
- how the school contributes to improvement in the wider system and the impact of the collaboration with other schools – in particular, with Collabor8 - *Soft federation, Hounslow Education Partnership and Peer Challenge providers.*

MIDDLE LEADERS

The role of the middle leader, working in partnership with the members of the SLT who lead on teaching and learning, is pivotal in ensuring a strong focus on teaching and learning and, through their individual and collective leadership, in constantly improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to improve the outcomes for all pupils.

It is important that middle leaders are not seen to work in isolation from other leaders. They need to be aware of each other's priorities and how they feed into each area of the curriculum

As part of their role, middle leaders and managers will be involved in contributing to school self- evaluation and will be able to:

- expand on the **significant strengths and areas for improvement** of the school
- detail the evidence that supports statements in the SEF, especially concerning the quality of teaching and learning and pupil progress
- discuss the main aids/barriers to school improvement and to be able to discuss how the school meets the criteria for capacity to improve

Middle leaders will also be involved with and consider:

- **The major priorities** for the school and what it most needs to do to move forward - and to see how these relate to the main priorities identified in the SEF and the School Improvement Plan.
- The role and responsibilities of middle leaders and how the role has developed in the past two years.
- The impact of middle leaders on learning.
- The main strands in the school's strategy **to improve teaching – is there a consistent vision of what 'good/outstanding teaching' looks like?**
- The school's approach to establishing accurate base-line data in order to agree an on-entry judgement and as a basis for monitoring progress.
- How well the school meets the needs of all groups of pupils including the most able, SEN, PPG, and what the school does to narrow the gap within groups, e.g. B/G, EAL and non-EAL.
- The processes for tracking pupil achievement and progress and the evidence that pupils are learning and making progress.
- How effective and robust is performance management including the extent to which the school takes account of the 'Teachers' Standards'?

- How professional development has improved the quality of teaching and individual teachers.
- How well the school promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.
- How well the school uses the new primary school sport funding to improve the quality and breadth of PE?
- Leaders/managers' views on the strengths and weaknesses in their own specific areas, including the management of behaviour.
- The impact of monitoring and involvement of the year leader / subject leader. (What professional development is in place to support them in their role?)
- How the manager is held to account, and manages others. What is the manager's view of the effectiveness of the process of school self-evaluation procedures?
- The effectiveness of classroom observations and monitoring.
- The procedures for feedback following classroom observation and the impact of this on the improvement of practice?
- The extent to which leaders' monitoring of teaching has identified needs and provided targeted pedagogical guidance for teachers.
- What has been the whole school focus to improve the quality of teaching? Does the school have a common approach to teaching and learning?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / JOINT PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

The school expects all teachers to recognise the two elements of their job –

- the teaching and learning role
- their role in school improvement

We believe that in order to carry out these two elements of the role it is important that teachers have a whole school perspective and are well informed with regard to:

- The impact of teaching on pupils' learning – understanding that the quality of teaching makes a difference to children's learning
- What good and outstanding teaching and learning looks like
- The school's teaching and learning strategy
- The major priorities for school improvement
- The processes for monitoring pupil progress and achievement
- The achievement and progress of pupils
- How assessment is used to inform pupils' learning needs
- The effectiveness of the literacy, including reading, and mathematics strategy
- The impact of the school's marking policy on pupil progress
- How well the school meets the needs of all groups of pupils
- The performance management and professional development
- The impact of professional development on teaching and learning
- The classroom observation process and the impact of this process
- The learners' behaviour and the impact of this on learning
- Staff engagement in school improvement

APPENDIX 1

TAKING TEACHING AND LEARNING FORWARD

The key purpose of lesson observations is to evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. Although a particular approach is not advocated for teaching and there isn't a preference for a particular lesson structure, the school does have guidelines consistent with best practice. As part of this process we record aspects of teaching that are effective and identify ways in which learning and teaching can be improved.

The extent to which the 'Teachers' Standards' are being met is also an essential element of classroom observation and teacher behaviour.

In addition, we also look at how well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being supported.

The following sections are consistent with the Ofsted School Inspection Handbook (January 2014).

Observing teaching and learning

When making a judgement on the quality of teaching, we are guided by the response and engagement of pupils and evidence of how well they are learning.

In doing this, senior leaders will want to see evidence that:

- teaching engages and includes all pupils with work that is challenging enough and that meets their individual needs, including the most able
- pupils' response demonstrate sufficient gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding including of literacy and mathematics
- teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons and use the information well to adapt their teaching
- teachers use questioning and discussion to assess the effectiveness of their teaching and promote pupils' learning
- assessment is frequent and accurate and used to set relevant work from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards
- pupils know how to improve their work
- pupils are taught well so they are prepared for the next stage in their learning.

During a lesson senior leaders may look through books and sometimes talk to pupils about their learning.

Evaluating learning over time

The direct observations of senior leaders are supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable them to evaluate the impact of teaching over time and its impact on learning. Such additional evidence may include:

- evidence arising from observations of lessons carried out by outside personnel
- discussions with pupils about the work they have undertaken and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods
- discussion about teaching and learning with middle leaders, teachers and teaching assistants and other staff
- feedback from pupils and parents/carers

- scrutiny of pupils' work, with particular attention to:
 - how well and frequently marking, assessment and testing are used to help teachers improve pupils' learning
 - the level of challenge provided
 - pupils' effort and success in completing their work and the progress they make over a period of time and assessment information

Prompts that senior and middle leaders use to support the schools' assessment of the impact of teaching on learning include:

Quality of learning

- What are different groups and individual pupils *actually* learning as opposed to *doing*?
- Are pupils consolidating previous skills/knowledge or learning something new?
- Can all pupils make the links between previous/new learning?
- Can pupils talk about what they are learning, as opposed to simply describing what they are doing?
- Do they consistently produce work of a good or better standard?
- Are pupils self-reliant - do they make the most of the choices they are given or do they find it difficult to make choices? To what extent do pupils take responsibility for their own learning?
- Do pupils ask questions, of each other, of the teacher or other adults, about what they are learning?
- Are pupils creative? Do they show initiative?
- How well do pupils follow routines/expectations?
- Do pupils know more at the end of the lesson than they did at the beginning? It is at least good progress when the vast majority of pupils acquire knowledge and understanding.

Enjoyment of learning and attitudes

- Are pupils engaged, working hard, making a good effort, applying themselves, concentrating and productive?
- Are pupils developing habits of good learning?
- Are pupils happy with their work? Are they proud of it?
- Are pupils interested in their work and in what they are learning or are they easily distracted?
- Do pupils settle to work easily?

Pupils' progress

- How well are pupils progressing in relation to their starting point?
- Are different groups making the same/different progress in particular those in receipt of the pupil premium and the most able?
- What new skills and knowledge are pupils gaining?
- How well are pupils developing ideas and increasing their understanding?
- Are pupils making gains at a good rate in lessons and over time as shown in their work and the school's records?
- How are weak/good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills affecting pupils' progress?
- Is learning sustained across all year groups and does it apply to all groups of pupils?

The quality of provision

- Are staff using assessment information effectively?
- Are activities pitched at the right level to challenge pupils of different abilities?
- How well does marking identify strengths and diagnose next steps to improvement?
- How good is the dialogue and oral feedback? Are teachers alert to pupils' lack of understanding during lessons?
- How effectively do staff use questioning to gauge pupils' understanding? Are expectations of behaviour sufficiently high?
- Are teachers alert to the social, emotional and learning needs of individuals?
- What impact are any support staff having?
- Are resources sufficient? Are they well matched to needs to support learning? How well are teaching assistants deployed and what is their impact?

How do we know if teaching is contributing to outstanding progress over time?

Outstanding teaching results in almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special education needs, those in receipt of the pupil premium and the most able are making rapid and sustained progress.

Outstanding learning over time can come in many guises so lessons do not need to fit to a format and there is no expectation that a particular teaching style is used (Ofsted inspectors do not require or expect this).

- **Does the teacher have consistently high expectations of all pupils and plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum, with an emphasis on reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills?**
- **Does the teacher generate a high level of engagement and commitment to learning as well as encouraging pupils to read widely?**
- Does the teacher use excellent subject knowledge to consistently challenge and inspire pupils so that they learn exceptionally well?
- Do pupils recognise and can they explain links with earlier learning?
- Does the teacher provide stimulating experiences that have meaning for pupils and build up their understanding?
- Is the teacher acutely aware of pupils' capabilities, prior learning and understanding and does (s)he plan effectively to build on these?
- **Does the teacher use well-judged and often inspirational teaching strategies?**
- **Is marking and feedback of high quality and homework appropriately set?**
- Do pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn and how to demonstrate this (e.g. success criteria)?
- **Does the teacher check pupils' understanding throughout the lesson systematically and effectively – anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with impact on the quality of learning?**
- Does the teacher anticipate where intervention may be needed and respond rapidly to pupils who need further input or reinforcement?
- Does the teacher recognise when pupils are capable of moving on at a faster pace and adapt the lesson accordingly?
- Do interventions have a striking impact on the quality of learning?
- Are pupils encouraged to explore their ideas through talk, to ask and answer questions and to listen to and build upon each other's ideas?
- Does the teacher ask probing questions and challenge pupils to explain ideas, concepts, strategies or reasoning in appropriate language?
- Are questions targeted at specific pupils/groups to ensure all are engaged and participating actively in whole class sessions?

- Do additional adults provide precisely targeted support for individual/groups of pupils?
- Do teachers/assistants monitor pupils' understanding/progress throughout the lesson, deal promptly with misconceptions, and extend pupils' thinking through questioning?
- At strategic points in the lesson, does the teacher refocus pupils on expected outcomes e.g. mini-plenaries?
- Does the teacher systematically check pupils' understanding as the lesson progresses?
- If a task requires pupils to work independently or to collaborate, do they do so with confidence and success?
- Do pupils show an enjoyment in learning?
- Is learning significantly enhanced by the use of carefully selected, interesting resources, including ICT?
- Are pupils developing confidence, do they persevere to overcome difficulties and check their own work for inaccuracies?
- Are pupils given time to reflect on and explain what they have learnt?
- Do they assess their own and others' learning in relation to lesson objectives?

Prompts for discussions with pupils in lessons

- Progress: establish how secure learners' progress is by asking 'Do you understand what you are doing and why'.
- Are you capable of doing more? Have you learned about this before?
- Marking and assessment: Do you know how well you are doing?
- Do you know how you might improve?
- Do you have targets?
- Is your work marked regularly and is the marking helpful?
- Homework: is it set regularly? How much do you get? What kinds of tasks are set? What happens if it is not done?
- ICT: do you get much chance to use it? If so, how do you use it?

Quality of marking

Points to consider when looking at books and undertaking a work scrutiny:

- does work ensure good coverage of the curriculum?
- is work age appropriate and differentiated?
- does work across the year build learning?
- is there evidence of pupils being active participants in the learning process?
- are links being made across curriculum areas, for example, does marking in science take into account the pupil's mathematics targets?
- does marking promote a dialogue, for example, and are next steps clear and is there good evidence that feedback is acted upon to ensure progress?

Inspectors triangulate to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning over time using evidence from:

- Assessment data / pupil tracking / targets
- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Dual lesson observations
- Discussions with pupils
- Discussions with staff
- School's own evaluation of impact of learning on groups/individuals
- Work scrutiny
- Evidence from questionnaires - parents, pupils and staff