



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR RINGWOOD SCHOOL ACADEMY

<b>Name of School:</b>	Ringwood School Academy
<b>Headteacher/Principal:</b>	Leanne Symonds
<b>Hub:</b>	Portsmouth
<b>School type:</b>	Secondary Academy
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	Not applicable

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	02/03/2020
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review (if applicable)</b>	Good
<b>Date of last QA Review (if applicable)</b>	21/03/2018
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	28/03/2017



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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:

<b>Leadership at all levels</b>	Leading
<b>Quality of provision and outcomes</b>	Effective

**AND**

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

<b>Area of Excellence (if applicable)</b>	Department of languages Accredited
<b>Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence (if applicable)</b>	A multidisciplinary approach to performing and production arts (21/03/2018)
<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate</b>	Effective

*Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed peer evaluation estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.*

## **1. Context and character of the school**

Ringwood School is a large comprehensive academy with a sixth form of around 300 students. The school is located in Ringwood, which is on the edge of the New Forest. In 2011, Ringwood became one of the first schools to be designated as a national teaching school. It leads the teaching school alliance alongside Bransgore Primary for the Southern Central Hampshire area. The headteacher is a national leader of education.

Most pupils at Ringwood are of White British heritage, and there are only a few whose first language is not English. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average. Similarly, there are lower than typical percentages of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has a relatively high number of pupils who are looked after by the local authority.

The school has a strong reputation locally for its performing arts provision and its highly acclaimed annual productions. The school's vision is 'inspired to learn, supported to succeed' and its aims are: 'Learn all you can; Achieve as much as you can; and Help others whenever you can'.

This Challenge Partners quality assurance review will be the second one for the school.

### **2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well**

- Senior leaders work extremely well together, sharing a commitment for continual improvement and a determination to do the best for all pupils. The headteacher is an excellent role model for staff and pupils, demonstrating a combination of empathy, passion and commitment. Her approach to distributed leadership has enabled senior and middle leaders to flourish and lead their areas effectively. The leadership has established a productive balance of school 'non-negotiables' and flexibility, which has resulted in staff creativity and flair.
- Leaders look after the well-being of staff and manage their workloads very carefully. They have set up working parties to consider these issues as well as communal events to encourage staff to socialise and relax. A supportive and convivial atmosphere was very evident in the informative teaching and learning briefing for staff during the review.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive focused and highly effective professional development, including subject knowledge and pedagogy, drawing appropriately on research. A very useful little booklet, 'My Professional Learning Log', enables staff to keep track of their professional learning. Middle leaders recalled how particular professional development, such as to improve the achievement of boys

- and the use of the 'one-pager', had made a significant difference to their teaching. Leaders have introduced regular briefing sessions on relevant topics, such as curriculum maps; the sessions are engaging and illustrate effective pedagogy and good practice from across a range of departments.
- Pupils benefit from a rich, broad and balanced curriculum in each key stage. They have access to a wide range of subjects at GCSE and a high proportion are entered for EBacc subjects. The school's 'open' access to triple science is popular and effective. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of interesting extra-curricular clubs, such as Japanese, Ringwood school radio, debating, LGBTQ+, science, media and recycling. There is also an extensive range of trips that enhance pupils' cultural capital, including some that are exclusively for disadvantaged pupils. In the month of March alone this year there are trips to Normandy, Paris, Kimmeridge Bay, Marwell zoo, the Natural History museum and a particle physics masterclass, to name but a few. The school takes full advantage of its location, with trips to the New Forest, Swanage, Lulworth Cove, Blashford Lakes, Old Sarum and Southampton University. There are also visits to Islamic places of worship. The pupils spoke very positively about these extra-curricular opportunities.
- The school has a strong focus on character education through a well organised programme of personal development in 'life choices' as well as ethics and philosophy (EP) lessons, tutor periods and assemblies. The pastoral curriculum for Key Stage 4 includes a programme of activities known as VESPA (vision, effort, systems, practice, attitude), which is taught during tutor time; surveys indicate improvements in the five VESPA areas since the beginning of the year.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to lead, including as sports leaders, peer mentors, prefects and through the paired reading programme. Pupils are respectful of each other and of those who are different. For example, they demonstrated considerable sensitivity in an EP lesson, during a discussion about the wearing of hijabs.

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

...leaders prepared a centralised document that included an evaluation of the school's performance, the impact of previous actions and a link to the next steps for further improvement.

## **3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well**

- Teaching in Ringwood School has many strengths. Teachers demonstrate strong subject and pedagogical knowledge, as evident in their sharp, subject-specific feedback, their confidence and ability to address pupils' misconceptions. Teachers use technical terms accurately and expect pupils to do the same. The focus on key vocabulary was evident across the school. Year 11 pupils confidently referred to scientific terms such as 'global dimming', 'haemoglobin'

and 'acid rain' in a chemistry lesson. Year 12 business students used terms such as 'monopolistic markets' and 'life cycles' fluently and aptly.

- Links to prior learning were evident in lessons and in pupils' books, which demonstrated secure progress for all pupils. Teachers have planned and sequenced their subject curriculum 'intents' well. Key Stage 3 subjects provide useful curriculum maps for pupils, which set out key content, skills and objectives for the term. Pupils explained how they found these helpful and used them to track their progress.
- Teachers know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses well. Partly in response to an 'EBI' from the last Challenge Partners' review, leaders have focused more closely on individuals rather than classes. They have introduced 'one-pagers', in which teachers identify a small number of underachieving pupils in each class, consider their barriers and what simple actions they will take to support these pupils. The one-pagers were used effectively in most lessons during the review.
- Relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils, are respectful and warm, and create a purposeful learning climate throughout the school. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning result in a high level of engagement in lessons and pride in the presentation of their work. Most pupils respond in detail to written feedback, through the use of purple pens. Pupils say that staff are supportive, know how well they are doing and help them to revise.
- The literacy catch-up programme is organised carefully and has had a significant impact on improving the reading levels of pupils in Years 7 and 8 who join the school with weak skills. The 'Reading Plus' programme enables pupils to work at their own pace and to track their own progress. It is coordinated well with Accelerated Reader in which reading books have been carefully organised and matched to reading levels by the enthusiastic librarians in the well-resourced and attractive library.
- Transition arrangements for pupils joining in Year 7 are very well organised. There is good liaison with primary schools that feed into Ringwood, for example working together to plan the curricula for subjects such as history and languages. An innovative and very effective approach is that each incoming Year 7 pupil receives at the end of Year 6 a copy of the book *Wonder*, which has a theme of kindness and tolerance. Elements of the book are then referred to in assemblies and tutor periods throughout the year.
- Pupils achieve well at Ringwood. Progress 8 overall has typically been average or above and results in EBacc have been high. For example, the EBacc element of Attainment 8 was in the highest 20% of all schools in 2018 and 2019. Science results have improved dramatically as a result of strong leadership and teaching, with value-added and the percentage attaining grade 4+ being in the top fifth of schools for the last two years. Results in languages have also been strong (see area of excellence section).
- Students also achieve very well in the sixth form, which offers a wide range of academic subjects. For example, the value-added and average point scores for A levels were significantly above the national averages in 2018 and 2019.

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

... Teachers challenged pupils further through:

- providing more opportunities for them to develop higher order thinking skills, and
- encouraging and enabling them to respond more fully to questions in class.

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

- The school is committed to doing the best for all its pupils; this is manifest in the nurturing yet aspirational culture of the school and the focus on each pupil as an individual. An assistant headteacher oversees provision for pupils with SEND, LAC and those who are disadvantaged. This approach is working well as she maintains a clear overview of the progress and needs of the pupils, many of whom fall into several of these categories. Leaders responded positively to a review of SEND provision in March 2019 and they have prepared an excellent directory of strategies for high quality teaching and how teaching can be tailored to meet pupils' different needs.
- Leaders are well aware of the need to continually improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils. Teachers know who their disadvantaged pupils are and how they can best support them. The regular data analysis planning meetings consider the progress of all pupils and include a particular focus on pupils who are disadvantaged and/or with SEND. The 'one-pager' approach encourages teachers to identify ways to ensure that individual pupils' needs are met.
- The achievements of disadvantaged pupils tend to be cohort-dependent because of the relatively low numbers, but the gap was diminishing prior to 2019 and Progress 8 for disadvantaged pupils was average in 2018. The work of current pupils is of a comparable standard to other pupils and this year's Year 11 cohort is on track to achieve well.
- Pupils with SEND are supported effectively and make strong progress. The school has gained a well-deserved positive reputation in the area for its provision for pupils with SEND. Work seen of pupils with SEND, including those with education and health care plans (EHCPs), was of a good standard and showed that they were receiving a high quality curriculum, in line with their peers. Progress 8 for pupils with SEND has been positive in the last few years and is set to rise even higher with a prediction of +0.71 for pupils with EHCPs this year, which is very positive.

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

...leaders tracked attendance by different groups of pupils in clubs and other extra-curricular activities more forensically.

## **5. Area of Excellence**

### **Department of languages**

#### **Accredited**

### **5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?**

The languages department enjoys a high profile in the school and in the local area. Pupils achieve extremely well in both GCSE and A-Level languages of French, Spanish and German. The school explains this success in terms of a combination of strong specialist subject pedagogical knowledge and a broad, balanced and innovative curriculum.

The department has an extremely strong team ethos. Teachers plan together to ensure consistency and a high level of challenge across all classes, as seen during the review. The department has an experienced team of teachers that includes a specialist leader of education (SLE) and four GCSE / A-level examiners, who regularly share and lead training sessions for other teachers. There are native speakers in the department, who help to give pupils a greater insight into the culture and language.

The department aims to bring languages to life in the classroom and across the school. Teachers make good use of technology to enhance practice, but also value more traditional ways of developing cultural understanding, though, for example, the use of pen-pal letters and trips abroad. The visits to schools in France and Spain enable pupils to interact with peers from other countries. Chinese and Spanish pupils visit the school to experience life in an English school and to allow Ringwood pupils to have the chance to host them.

Two years ago, the department established the only modern foreign languages network in the area, covering the New Forest as well as Bournemouth and Poole. The meetings, which are led by Ringwood staff, are well attended, and participants stated that they

provided the 'best CPD they have had in years'. Areas covered in these meetings have included: sessions run by 'writing and speaking' examiners; use of film in language teaching; teaching listening and reading; using authentic resources in the classroom; feedback from other training and conferences; and discussions around assessment, curriculum and planning.

Sharing best practice has been a priority and the department has welcomed many other heads of department and teachers. For example, in the past 18 months, representatives from five schools have joined the department to observe lessons and discuss the curriculum. The department also shares resources with schools in the network and works with the primary feeder schools to enable a smooth transition in languages from Key Stage 2 to 3. The department's Key Stage 3 coordinator regularly meets with the primary schools' language coordinators and, together, they have agreed the knowledge and skills that should be taught in Key Stage 2 to ensure progress into Year 7 and beyond.

The department works with Southampton University to run a subject specialism training programme in French and Spanish for teachers who need support with pedagogy and learning in their second language. As well as regularly training School Direct trainees, two of the department staff also lead outreach with the University of Southampton, running training sessions for trainee teachers. Teachers from the department run a languages course for the primary trainees within the teaching school network and the SLE shares practice across schools in outreach work and peer reviews.

## **5.2 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?**

The school has sustained a strong set of results in languages over the years. All pupils study a language until the end of Year 9 and there is a high uptake at GCSE, despite languages being optional. Many pupils also study two languages for GCSE.

Over two thirds of pupils were entered for a language GCSE examination in 2019, which was well above the national average. Results at the end of Key Stage 4 and at A-level have been very high. For example, in 2019, Progress 8 for languages was + 0.61 and the proportion of pupils who achieved grade 4 or above was in the highest 20% of all schools. Current Year 11 pupils are on track to attain equally well if not better in 2020 in French and Spanish (German is not offered this year).

At A level, results have also been above average in French, Spanish and German. In 2019, for example, 100% of students attained grades A\* to C in these subjects, with high proportions attaining grades A or A\*.





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

Name: Louisa Hoff

Title: Senior leader for languages

Email: [louisa.hoff@ringwood.hants.sch.uk](mailto:louisa.hoff@ringwood.hants.sch.uk)

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

Leaders would be interested in knowing where there are outstanding examples of curriculum design and practice around pupil premium in the Challenge Partner network.

**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.**