



**VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP QUALITY
ASSURANCE REVIEW**

**REVIEW REPORT FOR
KINGSBURY GREEN ACADEMY**

Name of School:	Kingsbury Green Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Jason Tudor
Hub:	Wootton Bassett
School phase:	Secondary
MAT (if applicable):	Royal Wootton Bassett

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this virtual Leadership Quality Assurance Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	18/11/2020
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Effective
Date of last QA Review	12/02/2020
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Not yet inspected
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	N/A



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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	Effective
School improvement strategies	Leading
Approach to recovery and remote learning	Not applicable
Area of excellence– Careers Education	Accredited
Previously accredited valid areas of excellence	Not applicable
Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate	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

Kingsbury Green Academy is an average-sized secondary school, with a sixth form of some 100 students. It has a semi-rural location in the small town of Calne, on the edge of the North Wessex downs in Wiltshire. The academy joined the successful Royal Wootton Bassett Academy Trust (RWBAT) in September 2019. Prior to joining RWBAT, the academy was known as the John Bentley School, which was judged to require improvement when inspected by Ofsted in 2018. Since that time, the school roll has increased and results have improved.

Kingsbury Green Academy is a 'truly comprehensive school' serving a broad spectrum of socioeconomic areas. Attainment on entry is broadly average but academy leaders report that high proportions of pupils join Year 7 with reading ages below their chronological age, due in part to the prolonged period of educational absence caused by the Covid pandemic.

Most of the pupils are of White British origin with around a quarter who are disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average.

The school's values are courage, confidence, creativity, conscientiousness and consideration for others, and its mission statement is 'achieving excellence together'.

2.1 Leadership at all Levels - What went well

- The headteacher has established a strong, cohesive and dynamic leadership team, which has demonstrated a dogged determination to raise standards by offering the best education to all the pupils. Alongside this relentless drive and high expectations, leaders have maintained an inclusive culture in which, as one governor said, 'everyone cares about everyone'. Communication is a strength and results in staff, parents and pupils being clear about what is expected of them, leading to consistency, trust and respect.
- Leaders at all levels are fully aware of the school's development priorities and their role in how they should be delivered; for example, the 'learning cycle' is becoming firmly embedded and is understood and appreciated by pupils. Middle leaders demonstrate an impressive understanding of their curriculum intent. They are also clear about how to prioritise support for disadvantaged pupils, following the academy's 'First PP' approach, which has seen an improvement in progress and attainment.

- Kingsbury Green Academy is an inclusive school and the education of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND is given a very high priority. This is epitomised by the care and commitment with which the SEND leader oversees provision for these pupils, including the planning and monitoring of interventions. SEND staff are well trained and all teachers held to account for high quality wave 1 teaching. As a result, no pupil is left behind, and progress of pupils with SEND has improved over time.
- There is a well-structured programme of professional development for colleagues at each stage of their career. Staff benefit from opportunities to participate in national training programmes as well as in-house and RWBAT courses. Participants in the national professional programmes have contributed to school development, for example, leading on the development of a new homework policy and of the reading recovery project.
- Pupils benefit from a wide-ranging and appropriate curriculum, which includes popular enterprise, creative and technology subjects throughout Key Stage 3. The proportion of Key Stage 4 pupils following EBacc subjects has increased significantly this year to 49%, which is above the national average figure. Sixth form students are also offered a range of subjects including A levels, vocational subjects, personal, social and health education, careers advice and guidance. The curriculum provision has been adapted in light of Covid, but the offer is still comprehensive so that students are not adversely affected by the challenges of the pandemic.
- Prior to Covid, pupils could participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as 'The world in action', science, orchestra, sport, music (including guitar) and fitness in the academy's well-equipped gymnasium. Each teacher contributed one activity per week and attendance was high. During Covid restrictions, the academy has retained its offerings for Year 7 and extended the day until 4 pm for Year 11 to enable teachers to provide catch-up sessions where necessary.
- Links have been made with community groups and local businesses. Pupils take part in work experience in Year 10 and in the sixth form, and they explained how useful this was in informing their decisions about possible future careers.
- Governors understand the context of the school and are fully supportive of academy leaders at all levels, whilst also providing an appropriate level of challenge. They have been fully involved in setting the academy's vision and in monitoring the delivery of the development plan. They know the academy well through, for example, a structured programme of monitoring visits.

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

- ...more opportunities were found for sharing best practice within the RWBAT, for example between senior leaders and between individual subject and faculty areas.
- ...leaders ensured that all pupils were fully aware of the academy's values, which were introduced last year.
- ...leaders ensured that more pupils had opportunities to develop and demonstrate leadership skills.

3.1 School improvement strategies and the extent to which these address the needs of different groups of learners, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs- What went well

- Leaders' relentless focus on school improvement has been driven by well-selected priorities and practice, based securely on educational research. The impact has been seen in terms of improved examination results, behaviour and attendance. Governors and staff spoke about how behaviour has improved through the consistent implementation of a clear policy, which is well understood by pupils. Senior leaders, the involvement of the 'Hub' and appointment of key members of staff have contributed to an improvement in attendance.
- Improvement plans show a clear thread of personalisation and focus on the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. The views of staff, parents and pupils are regularly sought and taken into account. Staff feel listened to and valued.
- Leaders responded well to the 'even better ifs' from the last Challenge Partners peer review in 2019. For example, they provided training in questioning for staff because this was identified in the review. Middle leaders presented themselves extremely well in this review and demonstrated a firm grasp of the need to measure impact.
- Leaders have continued to embed the 'learning cycle' approach to learning, which has resulted in improved consistency of teaching and learning, whilst enabling creativity and departmental differences. Pupils, and their parents, clearly understand the purpose of the learning cycle and how it has helped them to learn and to remember information.
- The academy's three-tier reading recovery strategy is comprehensive. It targets support for individual pupils as well as through departments and via a whole school approach to encouraging reading for pleasure. Pupils with particularly low reading ages are given regular personalised interventions. Key Stage 3 pupils have fortnightly library lessons, which encourage independent reading and enable staff to listen to targeted pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reading aloud.

Pupils read and discuss a common text during tutor periods. For example, Year 10 pupils explained how they were reading 'Thug', which had been introduced in response to 'Black Lives Matter', and how they valued the ensuing discussions.

- Leaders demonstrate a keen awareness of what is working well and what needs to improve through regular monitoring of provision. They have introduced an innovative and highly effective approach to peer reviews involve a 'triad' of departments. This has been well received and resulted in the sharing of best practice across departments.

3.2 School improvement strategies and the extent to which these address the needs of different groups of learners, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs - Even better if...

- ...the academy ensures that its procedures for reviewing the robustness of all interventions (with a particular focus on the reading programme) are effective.
- ...leaders formalised an approach to sharing examples of departmental innovation and development, which exemplify the trust's commitment to excellence.

4.1 Approach to recovery and remote learning - What went well

- The academy's approach to recovery has been carefully planned and successfully executed. Leaders have been particularly effective at anticipating pressures and putting measures in place to mitigate them. Risk assessments and a revised timetable have been developed very effectively, with the involvement of all staff, to ensure a safe return to school. This assiduous planning has resulted in high attendance levels of pupils and staff.
- Leaders have established well-received and successful remote learning procedures. Pupils required to learn from home have been able to immediately access appropriate academic work. The school has provided a range of learning channels such as 'MS Teams' and 'Show My Homework' that help learners to access work and maintain strong lines of communication with their teachers.
- Pupils have also benefitted from pastoral support, such as virtual assemblies, access to form tutors and assistance from the SEND department, as necessary. The school has employed a school counsellor within the Hub to address specifically identified individual pastoral needs. This extra support has resulted in a clear focus on mental health in tutor time and the engagement of pupils has been positive.

- The education welfare officer and academy leaders' relentless focus on targeting individual pupils has resulted in improved attendance of the most vulnerable.
- Parents recognise the academy's commitment to maintaining a strong focus on academic and pastoral learning. They praised the clear and regular communication from the academy and said that they are given the guidance they need to fully support their children at home.
- The school's curriculum has been successfully adapted to ensure gaps in students' learning have been addressed. Baseline assessments at the start of the year have been used to inform the curriculum changes.

4.2 Approach to recovery and remote learning - Even better if...

...academy leaders considered exploring the benefits of promoting the school rewards system virtually and ensuring it continues to raise the aspirations of all its core priority groups (in particular high prior attaining pupils).

5. Area of Excellence

Careers Education

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 careers department has a school-wide vision and approach that is aligned, not only to the Gatsby benchmarks but also to the aims and values of the school and the RWBAT as a whole. The delivery of the careers strategy is set out in a detailed and comprehensive plan (long term and short term), which highlights the key milestones and necessary actions to ensure the most positive impact for students. The strategy includes a range of opportunities for staff training, to build their confidence and expertise in the delivery of careers education.
- The academy benefits from having a careers leader who was praised highly by governors for raising aspirations and supporting students. She is knowledgeable, passionate, and dedicated, with a level 6 professional diploma in careers guidance. She has also completed the Teach First Career Leader programme and is regularly

invited to speak at several fora about the academy's practice. In addition, the careers team offers support and advice to other schools in the trust and elsewhere.

- A significant strength of the careers programme is its successful engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Governors and parents commented on the well-attended regular breakfast meetings to which employers are invited. Stakeholders are empowered to be advocates for students, increasing their aspirations and subsequently their academic achievement.
- Internal staff are proactive in building on students' careers education within all curriculum areas and, where possible, involve external stakeholders within lessons to bring learning to life. The careers leader has audited provision across all subjects and each department has a 'careers champion' and careers noticeboards in classrooms.
- Pupils benefit from careers guidance from their academy careers leader and an independent careers adviser. The department has introduced new systems, such as Compass Plus and Careerpilot Pathway Planner, which pupils described as being helpful in suggesting possible careers and the necessary qualifications.

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

- The academy monitors the impact of its careers provision in several ways. For example, Careerpilot Pathway Planner is used to track the progress of Year 11 and post-16 students in terms of their career decision-making. This shows that, this year to date, 100% of students have moved forward in a positive way following their careers personal guidance meeting.
- The academy works determinedly, and with much success, to raise aspirations of disadvantaged pupils and to support those with SEND. For example, the careers leader attends annual review meetings for pupils with education health and care plans, which has resulted in pupils being more ambitious about their career paths and inspired to work harder. The department works closely with Wessex Inspiration Network (WIN) to encourage disadvantaged pupils to consider further and higher education. This involvement has proved very successful with nearly all those Year 11 and 13 students who took part continuing their studies.
- The department has, for the past three years, run a mentoring programme for disadvantaged and WIN pupils. The vast majority of pupils involved in the project stated an increase in confidence, an understanding of skills needed for careers and the range of possible career opportunities. In addition, nearly three-quarters said that they were more positive about school.
- The academy's regular surveys of pupils' voice shows that pupils respond well to their careers lessons and activities such as careers fairs and work experience. Comments such as 'great opportunities are provided' and 'careers information



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received is useful and informative' reflect the views of pupils. These were also expressed during the review with sixth form students particularly effusive about their careers education.

- The careers framework has also played a central role in the remote learning offer to pupils. For example, the UCAS application process has continued, resulting in pupils feeling more confident about career choices.