



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR PARK HIGH SCHOOL

Name of School:	Park High School
Headteacher:	Colette O'Dwyer
Hub:	Chrysalis Hub
School phase:	11-18
MAT (if applicable):	N/A

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	N/A
Date of this Review:	02/03/2026
Overall Estimate at last QA Review:	Leading
Date of last QA Review:	03/03/2025
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	08/10/2024

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers, agrees 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/or pupils with additional needs N/A

Area of excellence Accredited

Previously accredited valid areas of excellence Driving whole-school improvement through a comprehensive CPD programme, 03/03/2025
Effective careers provision in a secondary mainstream academy, 06/03/2024

Overall peer evaluation estimate N/A

Important information

- The QA Review provides a peer evaluation of a school's practice in curriculum, teaching and learning, and leadership. It is a voluntary and developmental process, and the peer review team can evaluate and offer 'peer evaluation estimates' based only on what the school chooses to share with them.
- The QA Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades. The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is developmental not judgmental.
- The QA Review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. If you choose to share this report, or extracts thereof, externally (e.g. on your website or with parents), please ensure that it is accompanied with the following text:

Challenge Partners is a charity working to advance education for the public benefit. We are not a statutory accountability body. The QA Review does not audit schools' safeguarding or behaviour policies and practices. However, Lead Reviewers and visiting reviewers are expected to follow Challenge Partners' safeguarding policy and report any concerns as set out in the procedures.

1. Context and character of the school

Park High School (PHS) is a larger than average, non-selective, comprehensive secondary school with 1482 students on roll aged between 11 and 18 years old. It is based in the London Borough of Harrow, and became a stand-alone academy in 2011, having been established in 1939.

The school serves a diverse community with most major ethnic groups represented. Around seven in ten students are identified as having English as an additional language (EAL). The proportion of disadvantaged students is broadly in line with the national average. Similarly, the proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those with an educational, health and care plan (EHCH), is close to the national average.

The school's ethos and vision are underpinned by its commitment to character virtues of resilience, curiosity, integrity, teamwork and compassion. The school's vision is to 'inspire young people to be confident and successful learners who contribute positively to society as responsible citizens'. The PHS ethos is 'investing in each other to be the very best we can be'.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The headteacher demonstrates courageous, transformational leadership rooted in a clear moral purpose that drives improvement and shapes the school's culture. Her vision permeates the senior leadership team, creating a united commitment to high expectations, professional growth and strong relationships across the school community.
- Leaders prioritise strengthening teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogy through a well-structured programme of continuing professional development focused on effective classroom practice and evidence-informed strategies. Recent training has emphasised the purposeful use of mini whiteboards to increase participation, check understanding and deepen thinking. For example, sixth form students explained that regular use of mini whiteboards had helped them consolidate their learning in history.
- Curriculum leaders ensure that carefully planned schemes of work guide the delivery of programmes of study and support clear progression within and across subjects. Ongoing review through department meetings, learning walks and assessment analysis helps maintain consistency and responsiveness in curriculum delivery. For example, departments reviewed schemes of work and completed end-of-unit evaluations to refine teaching approaches.
- Middle leaders play a key role in securing improvement by monitoring teaching, analysing assessment information and supporting colleagues through coaching and professional dialogue. They work closely with senior leaders to embed whole-school priorities and strengthen classroom practice.

For example, middle leaders join senior leaders on learning walks and use the insights gained to improve teaching within their departments.

- The school sustains a positive climate for learning in which students feel safe, respected and motivated to succeed. Clear expectations, supportive relationships and consistent routines help students develop strong attitudes to learning and behaviour. Students described teachers as supportive and approachable and spoke enthusiastically about the academic and pastoral support they had received.
- Leaders actively engage with the wider community to enrich learning and extend opportunities for students. Partnerships with local schools and organisations strengthen collaboration and enhance curriculum experiences. For example, the school hosted a Year 5 science fair where pupils from neighbouring primary schools visited to participate in workshops.
- Curriculum enrichment contributes strongly to students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development through a well-established character programme and a broad range of events and experiences. These opportunities help students explore values and build a strong sense of belonging. For example, the school has organised cultural and arts evenings that celebrate student achievement and diversity. In addition, students in Year 9 and Year 11 were challenged to consider gender stereotypes and the empowerment of women during the termly big assembly.
- Students take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities that broaden learning and increase engagement with school life. A diverse programme of clubs, competitions and events encourages participation and celebrates achievement. For example, students participated in sporting competitions and achieved borough champion status in several events.
- Personal development is central to the school's ethos and plays an important role in shaping students' character and leadership skills. Through the character virtues and leadership opportunities, students develop responsibility and learn to contribute positively to the school community. For example, students serve as character ambassadors, form captains and representatives on the school council.
- Provision for well-being is comprehensive and supports students' emotional and mental health alongside their academic development. Pastoral support, counselling services and therapeutic programmes help students manage challenges and build resilience. For example, the school introduced forest school sessions and art therapy to support students' social and emotional well-being.

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

- ... leaders at all levels continued to intentionally and precisely empower others through the identification and application of best practice.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- The curriculum is designed with a clear rationale that emphasises character, aspiration, and academic success, ensuring that all students can access learning regardless of background or need. Leaders have embedded character virtues and redesigned the school's vision and ethos to strengthen expectations and promote opportunities for all students. This shared framework provides a consistent foundation for learning and helps ensure that academic development is closely linked with personal growth.
- Lesson routines are applied consistently through the 'Park Way', which promotes the five key principles (5 C's) of creativity and challenge, checking for understanding, communication, context, and character. These principles support clear classroom expectations and help students understand how to engage productively with learning tasks.
- The curriculum is coherently planned and carefully sequenced so that knowledge builds progressively over time and connects to prior learning. Leaders regularly review implementation through learning walks, book looks, and departmental discussions to ensure consistency in delivery and progression across subjects.
- Reading, writing, and oracy are prioritised across the curriculum so that students develop strong literacy skills and disciplinary vocabulary. Cross-curricular strategies and structured interventions support weaker readers and promote confident communication. For example, in a Year 7 history lesson, sentence stems such as "this suggests that..." helped students to structure analytical responses and develop historical reasoning.
- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and maintain their expertise through structured professional development, coaching, and collaboration across the school and local partnerships. This sustained professional learning strengthens classroom practice and subject pedagogy. For instance, computing staff have shared work on the growing use of Artificial Intelligence.
- Teachers consistently model accurate academic language and explicitly teach subject-specific vocabulary so that students develop precise speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Teachers reinforce disciplinary language through questioning and discussion. In a Year 7 art lesson, students confidently used terms such as analogous, triadic, and complementary colours when discussing colour theory.
- Students regularly revisit prior knowledge and apply it in new contexts through retrieval activities and questioning, supported by mini whiteboards, which deepens understanding. For example, a Year 10 mathematics lesson began with retrieval questions to help students recall prior learning before exploring a new mathematical enquiry.
- Teaching materials are carefully selected and well-prepared to support explanation, modelling, and independent practice. Resources often reflect examination expectations and practical application. In a Year 11 chemistry

lesson, past examination questions were used to apply understanding of reactive metals.

- Work set for students is appropriately demanding and encourages thoughtful, high-quality responses. Teachers maintain high expectations through modelling, questioning, and challenge. In a Year 11 English lesson, the teacher insisted on detailed responses that demonstrated students' strongest thinking.
- Students' knowledge, skills, and understanding develop well because teachers use adaptive strategies and targeted support to meet individual needs, including those of disadvantaged students and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Tasks are scaffolded where necessary. For example, a student with additional needs in a Year 12 politics lesson explained how work was broken down into manageable steps.
- Students are effectively prepared for the next stage of education through academic guidance, careers education, and wider learning opportunities, particularly within the sixth form, which encourages independence and aspiration.
- Across the wider curriculum, students demonstrate strong engagement, creativity, and progress beyond English and mathematics. For example, Year 7 art books showed clear progression from simple sketches to detailed portrait work.
- Teachers communicate high expectations for effort, conduct, and achievement, and students respond positively. Relationships between staff and students are respectful and supportive, creating a culture where students feel safe and motivated to succeed. Attendance is also prioritised through clear expectations, pastoral support, and targeted interventions that remove barriers to regular participation in school life.
-

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

... the use of mini whiteboards in lessons was further embedded to enable all teachers to accurately check understanding and deepen students' thinking.

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

- Leaders create a strong culture of inclusion where all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged students and those with additional needs, supported by clear systems and specialist leadership. For example, four trained special SEND leaders coordinate provision and ensure reasonable adjustments across the school.

- Leaders utilise strategic monitoring systems to track disadvantaged students and intervene early when concerns emerge. For instance, pastoral teams identify declining attendance promptly and provide specific support for vulnerable students and their families.
- The curriculum is adapted through a whole-school focus on adaptive teaching, so disadvantaged students and those with additional needs can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. In support of this, teachers use highly annotated seating plans with targeted strategies to inform support and delivery.
- Leaders ensure that barriers to learning are addressed using personalised strategies, specialist support staff and targeted interventions addressing academic, pastoral and therapeutic needs. For example, a member of support staff effectively assisted a student with an autistic spectrum disorder in a Year 10 mathematics lesson by scaffolding the learning in line with the student's identified need.
- The curriculum is further adapted through collaborative planning between pastoral teams, curriculum leaders and the SEND team to build a holistic understanding of need. For example, Heads of Year meet weekly with members of the SEND team to review students' progress and implement supportive strategies.
- Disadvantaged students and those with additional needs make measurable progress from their starting points because leaders prioritise early identification, personalised support and high expectations. For example, book scrutiny and student voice conducted by the Pupil Premium team have helped refine teaching approaches and narrow attainment gaps in recent years.
- Behaviour and attitudes are positive because staff know their students exceptionally well, and leaders promote an inclusive culture that prioritises understanding needs rather than sanctioning difficulty.

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

... leaders developed additional strategies for supporting students with English as an additional language (EAL).

5. Area of Excellence

Research-informed and practitioner-led ECT and ITT Training.

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 school has identified research-informed and practitioner-led training for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) as a strength because it has developed a coherent, structured programme that combines national entitlement with a carefully tailored school-based professional development model. The provision aligns closely with the Initial Teacher Training Early Career Framework (ECF) and is underpinned by a strong culture of evidence-informed practice. Regular engagement with research literature and the use of concise 'Think Pieces' promote professional dialogue and deepen teachers' understanding of effective pedagogy across departments.

Leadership and strategic direction have been central to establishing expertise in this area. The programme is led by an assistant headteacher with advanced qualifications in educational leadership and specialist knowledge of addressing disadvantage, ensuring that professional learning is both research-informed and responsive to students' needs. This leadership helps maintain a clear strategic focus on improving classroom practice and developing teachers' professional confidence.

The school supplements the ECF entitlement with a contextualised professional development programme that includes weekly targeted training sessions and opportunities to explore practical classroom strategies. These sessions support teachers in translating research into classroom practice and adapting approaches to the school's context and the needs of its students.

A strong mentoring culture further strengthens this provision. Trained subject mentors provide structured guidance and regular feedback, while additional support mechanisms such as buddy systems and cross-school ECT networks offer informal professional support and opportunities for collaboration.

The programme also benefits from partnerships with external organisations, including the Institute of Education, with the school hosting trainee teachers and contributing to professional forums and partnership activity.

Importantly, the model is embedded across the school rather than being reliant on a single individual. Multiple mentors contribute to the programme, staff regularly share expertise, and new colleagues are encouraged to take on mentoring and training roles, ensuring sustainability.

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

Evidence indicates that this approach has had a positive impact on classroom practice and student outcomes. Quality assurance findings show that the programme supports early career teachers in developing effective teaching strategies and consistent classroom routines. Improved teaching practice has translated into stronger outcomes for students, with Year 2 ECTs demonstrating positive residuals in Year 11 predicted grades across all groups, including disadvantaged students and those with SEND. In one example, a SEND student achieved a two-grade improvement compared with their target grade, illustrating the impact of responsive teaching and targeted support.

The programme also strengthens teachers' ability to respond to diverse learning needs. Training includes sessions on behaviour, classroom climate and adaptive teaching, alongside specialist input such as external autism training to support students with additional needs. Teachers report that these sessions have improved their practice and helped them create more positive, supportive learning environments.

Impact is also evident in wider student experiences. Several ECTs have progressed into leadership roles, contributing to school improvement and enrichment opportunities, including leading inclusive activities that involve disadvantaged and SEND students. This demonstrates sustained benefits for teaching quality.

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

Kim Day-Haynes
Assistant Headteacher
k.dayhaynes@parkhighstanmore.org.uk

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 content reports from across the partnership of schools and trusts including using AI tools to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector (sharing these with the partnership) each year. The QA Review reports remain confidential to Challenge Partners and the

host school. This ensures that schools embrace the review as a development process, acting as a catalyst for their ongoing improvement. This is the primary purpose of the QA review. However, our aim is that the thematic analysis will demonstrate the additional value of a sector wide overview, illustrated with real-life examples.

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 partnership of schools. The School Support Directory 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>)