



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR THE HARBOUR SCHOOL

Name of School:	The Harbour School
Head teacher:	Ian Hunkin
Hub:	Portsmouth Hub
School type:	Special

Estimate at this QA Review:	OUTSTANDING
Date of this Review:	27/03/2019
Estimate at last QA Review:	GOOD
Date of last QA Review:	28/02/2018
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	GOOD
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	03/06/2015

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	ACCREDITED
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Tuition for students not in school for medical reasons 2016
Overall Estimate	OUTSTANDING

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 Harbour School is a special school and alternative provision for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Harbour students are unable to attend mainstream schools because of social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) or for medical reasons. The school is based on four sites catering for students with different ages and needs. Years 5 – 9 are based at the Harbour School, Tipner. Key Stage 4 students are at the vocational centre. Years 5 – 11 who have medical needs, including being in hospital, are at the Harbour medical provision. Students with the most complex SEMH needs are at Stamshaw and the Bridge (similar provision to Stamshaw based at the Tipner site).

Students are allocated to one of four 'pathways'. Many begin at the neediest level where the aim is to re-establish engagement with education.

The amount of time students spend in the different provisions is variable. For students in Year 10, it is usual policy not to attempt reintegration to mainstream school, rather they are prepared for continuing their education at college. The school estimates that students begin at Harbour at the rate of three per week. Boys outnumber girls by about three to one. The proportion of students who are disadvantaged is well above the national average.

The school is overseen by an Interim Education Board. This came about following a crisis in financial management which pre-dated the appointment of the current headteacher.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- The school has expanded its website and added more detail about how the curriculum operates and what outcomes students are achieving.
- Funding for strategic development has increased, in particular through winning a grant from the Department for Education (DfE).

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- School leadership is very united and effective despite operating on four different sites. The present headteacher reorganised senior and middle leadership to provide a more coherent structure. At the same time, the reorganisation contributed to achieving a balanced budget. The senior team consists of the headteacher, heads of centre and special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). At the next level are three curriculum leaders for core subjects and pastoral leaders based on each site.
- The Harbour school development plan is entirely based on building relationships and trust with students in order for them to regain self-confidence and re-engage with education. These principles inform the approach to the different needs of students on the four sites.
- The achievement of a balanced budget, for the first time since the IEB supervised the management of the school, is a major achievement. At the same time, the

learning environment has substantially improved. Reassuring and calming learning environments are especially evident in three sites. An exceptional range of facilities support the courses on offer in the recently built vocational centre. This helps to prepare students as they progress to colleges of further education.

- Finding ways of motivating and accrediting students is fundamental to Harbour's aims. A core curriculum of emotional literacy, English and mathematics for all students extends in a rich range of ways. Students' progress is closely tracked and informs decisions about return to mainstream or opportunities to gain accreditation in the courses offered at Harbour.
- The key principles of the Harbour vision are transmitted to all staff in well-organised, professional development training, sometimes drawing on external expertise. In performance management and review the strongest emphasis is on building and developing relationships with students.
- The school is well-regarded by mainstream schools in the city. Students who have a prospect of returning to their mainstream school have dual-roll status to underpin partnership working. The Harbour system for assessing students' stage of emotional literacy is widely used in the city and in some London schools. This assessment informs plans to meet students' needs when they make managed moves between mainstream schools, as well as when they make transitions to and from the Harbour.
- The success of the Harbour is reflected by it being one of eight schools nationally to win a significant grant for participating in a DFE study. The focus is effective reintegration of students excluded from mainstream secondary schools. Harbour will front two pilot studies on working with families and providing mentors for students.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

...succession planning encouraged career development for even more future leaders, support staff and instructors

...the Harbour continued to develop ways of reaching out to the most reluctant attenders, so that they can benefit from the day-by-day social development and curriculum opportunities.

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

- The induction of instructors has an increased focus on teaching and learning.
- The whole school review of teaching has identified good practice in taking imaginative approaches to learning. Teachers plan lessons to be different from students' experience of mainstream schools.
- The system of progress checking introduced in 2017/2018 is embedded and measures progress consistently well in all four pathways.

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

- Social, language and communication skills (SLCS) are under-developed to different degrees for almost all students. Every learning activity and approach is focused on overcoming this disadvantage. Leaders and all staff constantly supplement teaching and learning activities designed to improve SLCS by modelling the Harbour way in all interactions with students. They listen and encourage students to express their feelings. They show understanding, they explain how the young person can improve and they motivate students to believe in themselves and trust others. The headteacher leads by example in this on all four sites and his ability to create bonds with students and staff is exceptionally influential on teaching and learning.
- At the Stamshaw site, in a one-to-one session of bike maintenance, the joint activity of repairing a puncture gradually drew the student into taking more hands-on responsibility. The tutor talked about what they were doing and, as the student's engagement and confidence gradually increased, a dialogue developed about the stages of the task. In another room, two tutors engaged students in a group discussion. The students all find difficulty in expressing their feelings and relating to others. The session was successful in getting the students involved in sharing their views about friendship. Both sessions clearly achieved the stated aims on students' progress records.
- At the Harbour School Tipner site, students enthusiastically engaged in a well-constructed 'escape room' scenario. The solution revealed in the mystery chest was the announcement of a future trip on a local ferry - much to their delight. The gaming and anticipation brought to life their study of local transport systems.
- In cookery in the vocational centre, students chopped ingredients to share in mixing bowls. They diligently followed instructions and responded to questions. Apart from the small number of students, it would be hard to say there was a difference from a well-conducted mainstream lesson.
- A radical approach in the medical provision has seen an expansion of accredited courses taught by tutors who are not qualified teachers. While these take place, very small groups of students receive intensive tuition in English and mathematics and a wide range of GCSE subjects – even astronomy and Japanese for individual students. The model, both in terms of building students' confidence and providing access to an unusual range of qualifications, is proving very motivating for students with previously poor attendance.
- Engagement and challenge were to the fore in all learning activities on all sites. Students needed to trust adults and collaborate with each other in constructive ways. Students used language and communication skills to make a social connection with the teacher and each other.

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

- ...the school continued to apply its approach to emotional literacy to all lessons and informal situations because it is so helpful in motivating students to re-engage and succeed in learning

...the headteacher's intention to additionally record exceptional talents shown by students, for instance musicianship, triggered opportunities and networking to develop that talent to a higher level.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- In the three core subjects of emotional literacy, English and mathematics there has been year-on-year improvement. The provision of a much wider range of accreditation in English and mathematics means that almost all students, who attend regularly enough, leave with accreditation ranging from entry level to GCSE or equivalent.
- In the emotional literacy measures applied across the age-ranges, more than three-quarters of students make expected progress and close to half make more than expected progress. Harbour leaders have addressed national PIXEL conferences about the system and its outcomes, demonstrating its credibility.
- The levels of accreditation in English tend to be ahead of attainment in mathematics because many students have more fundamental gaps in their mathematical knowledge through previously disrupted education. However, the number of students gaining higher levels in mathematics is increasing.
- Between 50 and 60 students achieve reintegration to their mainstream school, or make a fresh start, every year.
- Destination figures for Year 11 leavers are improving. The Harbour only measures college placements as successful if students are still in attendance in the Spring term of Year 12. There is an element of students being recorded as not in education, employment or training (NEET) but this has reduced. Some students who become NEET have been very irregular attenders at the Harbour, despite efforts to work with them at or near their homes to induce them to participate. The Harbour does offer continuing advice and support to ex-students who have no contact with post-16 education.
- Last year, all students in the medical provision leaving Year 11 gained five or more good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics. The pass rate was above average for the city.
- The vocational centre now offers a wide range of courses, many of which are a suitable preparation for further study at college. The expanded provision means that students can choose courses such as mechanics, land studies and animal care. The BTEC approach of compiling well-presented folders of evidence, rather than sitting terminal exams, reassures and motivates students.
- Students with the most complex needs have been following courses provided by ASCENTIS in vocational interests, outdoor studies and sport, as well as entry level mathematics and English.
- Disadvantaged students progress at least as well or better than the minority of non-disadvantaged students, so there is no gap in attainment between them.
- Boys outnumber girls by about three to one. There has been a progress gap, largely attributable to differences in attendance, but the gap is closing. This is because boys make better progress in the wider range of courses available.
- The significant group of looked after children has had a gap from their peers in the

progress they make. The school plans to appoint mentors, funded by the DfE grant, to support an already improving trend.

5. Area of Excellence

PACE+ approach to support social, emotional and mental health needs

Accredited

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

PACE+ is a system initially developed for adoptive families to win the trust of children who are likely to have experienced some trauma in the past. The school has adapted the principles of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy to an educational setting. PACE+ rebuilds students' trust in adult staff and enables them to re-engage in education. The PACE+ approach enhanced the school's support for emotional literacy by providing greater structure and guidance in responding to students.

Questionnaires completed by students, staff and parents testify to its effectiveness. As its impact on students became increasingly perceptible, in terms of positive behaviours, staff became convinced of its effectiveness.

Further training and development of expertise, working alongside national, published experts is planned.

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

A launch day of in-service training was followed up by a series of shorter sessions with visiting experts. Senior leaders now attend national conferences on the latest research. Educational psychologists are arranging visits to look at the impact on the school. Almost all of the city's secondary schools have commissioned training, funded by the DfE, from the Harbour on how PACE+ works and it is significantly influencing city-wide approaches to reducing negative behaviour. DfE funding was exclusively directed at secondary education. Local primary schools are now interested in purchasing the training, seeing the potential value. This testifies to its interest to mainstream schools as well as to special schools and alternative provision.

The school has secured a further grant from the DfE to pilot studies of working with parents and mentors to support reintegration to mainstream. Its PACE+ approach will significantly influence how both approaches develop.

The school plans to share its expertise and offer training to a wider audience, than just locally.

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

Negative behaviour becomes something that the student and adults need to find joint solutions to. The approach de-escalates conflict between the young person and figures of authority.

As the system has embedded at the Harbour School, the following statistical impacts have been noted. The incidence of temporary exclusions has reduced (the school does not permanently exclude). There have been fewer incidents of violence by pupils towards staff and towards each other. Recorded incidents of physical restraint have reduced. Reintegration rates to mainstream schools have improved. The proportion of students attending regularly enough in Key Stage 4 to succeed in accredited courses has increased.

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

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Title: headteacher

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

The school does not require additional support at this time.

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.