



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR JUNIPER HILL SCHOOL

<b>Name of School:</b>	Juniper Hill School
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Claire Garnett
<b>Hub:</b>	Aylesbury Vale
<b>School phase:</b>	Primary
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	N/A

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Leading
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	22/01/2025
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review</b>	Effective
<b>Date of last QA Review</b>	26/02/2024
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	05/07/2022



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

Juniper Hill School is located in Flackwell Heath, a village near High Wycombe. It is a large, two-form entry school. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils are White British and few speak English as an additional language.

The school has recently opened a purpose-built Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Unit, 'The Nest', which currently caters for six pupils with emotional trauma or disrupted childhoods.

The school's motto is: *Kindness Enjoyment Achievement*. Its values are: *Respect Community Curiosity Courage Creativity Independence*.

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

- The very experienced senior leadership team work extremely well together and maintain high aspirations for all pupils, whatever their needs and starting points. The school's all-embracing curriculum gives pupils deep knowledge and rich experiences. As the headteacher said, 'Every minute matters'.
- Leaders made a strategic decision to introduce Accelerated Reader to secure reading standards, especially at Key Stage 2. This has led to positive outcomes.
- The school's commitment to Trust-based Observations captures all the positives of lessons and enables leaders to make suggestions about what could be even better. This contributes to the culture of respect and kindness, while retaining a rigorous approach.
- Leaders do all they can to ensure that Early Career Teachers (ECTs) succeed, through dedicated mentoring and additional continuing professional development (CPD) beyond what they routinely receive, such as dealing with conflict among girls. They said, 'We want them to fall in love with teaching and to have a great experience'.
- Leaders have a clear strategic view of the school. Every member of staff knows the direction of travel and embraces the vision set out by senior leaders. They are willing to take on new ideas and try things out.
- A relentless culture of aspiration permeates the whole school community. Leaders want everybody to be the best they can be. Everyone is considered a lifelong learner, whether they are a pupil or a member of staff.

- Subject leaders are very passionate about their subjects and value the school's collaborative approach. Everyone is involved in changes to the curriculum. Subject leaders have time to develop and monitor their subjects, especially in phases different from their own.
- Subject leaders want pupils to be like a historian, a geographer and a scientist, with an emphasis on disciplinary skills. Every subject has a whole-school subject afternoon, with a specific theme. For example, the theme for geography coincided with Earth Day.
- Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) are paid to stay for CPD. They are all part of the National College and can access online courses. All staff receive CPD in specific initiatives such as Kagan structures and Read, Write Inc. Leaders encourage all staff to follow their personal interests through training.
- The school's Butterfly Curriculum is an innovative project where each class last year focused on a common butterfly and this year on a rare butterfly. Pupils have been working with the Chiltern Rangers and the Butterfly Conservation Trust to learn more. They visit nature reserves to see their butterfly and are now planting butterfly friendly shrubs and flowers.
- Pupil leadership is a particular strength. The pupils are highly empowered and carry their roles with pride and independence. The 'Juniper Cabinet' includes a Prime Minister and a Minister of Education. While the Sweeping Committee relishes the chance to sweep up leaves. One pupil said, 'There's training on offer and there's a chance for promotion by the time you get to Year 6. When you grow up you learn how to work with other people.'

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

... None identified.

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

- Teachers use modelling highly effectively. What A Good One Looks Like (WAGOLL) gives pupils a clear idea of what they should be working towards. For example, Year 4 pupils analysed a persuasive letter of complaint from the lighthouse keeper's wife about all the seagulls. In Year 2, pupils read a setting description of the chicken house in Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr Fox*.
- In Year 4 mathematics, the teacher modelled adding fractions using an egg carton and ping pong balls. This striking example engaged pupils very well. In Year 6 the teacher showed pupils how to use the specific vocabulary 'sacred',

'special', 'pilgrimage' and 'worship' when modelling an answer in religious education.

- Because teachers have an excellent knowledge of the school's unique curriculum, they are able to link learning to what pupils already know and think ahead to what they will learn next. This was the case when the mathematics teacher reminded pupils what they had learnt about fractions in Year 3 and how the current learning would support them in Year 5.
- Kagan Structures give pupils opportunities to collaborate. For example in a Year 3 Life Skills lesson, the teacher used 'Round Robin', where each pupil had 30 seconds in turn to give an example of when they had felt disappointed. This was followed up when the other members of the team had to say what a child selected electronically had shared.
- In Year 4 writing, the teacher used 'Talking Chips' where each pupil took turns to recall elements of writing they had learnt, laying down a chip as they did so. Afterwards, the teacher asked 'number three' on each table to stand up and report back.
- Teachers promote the use of new and interesting vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 2 created expanded noun phrases like, 'The plump and well-rounded chicken'. In Reception, children have numerous opportunities to use the vocabulary they have already learnt. When the teacher presented them with balloons filled with air and ice, one said, 'It's oxygen, it's all around us.'. Another said, 'The balloon feels icy.'
- The school enjoys calm, purposeful learning environments. Teachers have clear expectations and understand pupils' needs. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and have excellent relationships with each other and staff. Their behaviour is superb.
- Pupils share a sense of belonging to the school. This is echoed by governors and staff. A governor said, 'We feel part of a team; our opinions are valued. We are not seen as a separate entity.' Parents spoke about the 'Juniper Way' with kindness and respect running through it. An LSA said, 'We are seen as equals: it's not us and them'.
- Pupils are positive and enthusiastic about the school. They said that teachers make lessons fun and, 'You can talk to any adult about anything.' A pupil said, 'They listen to our ideas to expand what the school does.'
- Clubs include choir, singing at the local church, Bible club, sewing, art, drama, gymnastics and girls' football. There are many visits to places of worship, the temple, the Science Museum, Natural History Museum, Longworth Cove and Windsor castle. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 can go on residential, including to Shropshire.

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

... teachers explored approaches to securing more greater depth in writing.

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

- Teachers know the pupils really well. They are sensitive to their needs and support them in subtle ways, such as when asking all the number threes to stand up for a particular pupil to have a movement break.
- The school's culture of kindness ensures all pupils are respected and rewarded, for example with certificates. A pupil said, 'We like to see people having their moment'.
- Staff provide minor adaptations for individuals, such as standing desks. Pupils go out for their reading interventions with no fuss. Teachers respond to pupils' needs in the moment and give them space. They work hard to form a safe, secure attachment with every child.
- LSAs have had copious amounts of training and support, including Playfulness Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy (PACE), Read, Write Inc., and speech and language therapy. Staff know to use an attachment aware trauma-informed approach to teaching.
- The Nest is not intimidating for vulnerable pupils and gives them space. There is a snug they can go to if they are dysregulated, a home from home. Colour-schemes and furnishings have been thought through and strategically placed. The lead teacher is very passionate about her work, setting clear routines, so that pupils know what is expected of them.

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

... None identified.

## **5. Area of Excellence**

Inclusion: being respected, valued, supported and involved, regardless of your needs, in a nurturing mainstream school.

### **Accredited**

#### **5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?**

Inclusion is embedded in the culture of Juniper Hill School. One of the school's aims is 'to support everyone in the Juniper Community to achieve their best.' As a result, no one is left behind. Staff talk respectfully about families and pupils and aim to nurture a supportive community.

The school's new SEMH Unit, The Nest, for children who have experienced trauma or have had disrupted childhoods, is going from strength to strength. All pupils at Juniper are respected, valued, and supported regardless of their needs.

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

The school has invested in a significant amount of CPD for all staff that focuses on inclusion. This has ensured all members of staff have a good knowledge of different pupils' needs and are consistent in their approach. Training has included PACE, Growing up Disadvantaged, and Autism Awareness. The school's experienced LSAs support a wide range of need and have been able to access high quality training such as specialist phonics development, specific training from NHS therapy teams, and speech therapy training.

The leadership team and governors are passionate about creating an inclusive culture. All classes use a wide variety of inclusive strategies, including Kagan Structures (which support pupils with social skills deficits), coaching others (which supports lower attainers), and equal participation (with all pupils involved in learning). Pupils have the opportunity to work with a behaviour mentor, play therapist, and speech and language therapist in school. There is also a therapy dog. The school also works with a range of external agencies such as NHS therapies, virtual schools and social care.

The school's unique Life Skills curriculum focuses on helping to build pupils' resilience and self-help skills. It supports their confidence in dealing with worries and

unexpected life events. Curriculum enrichment includes Butterfly Conservation and Forest School for all pupils.

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

Early identification of need means that pupils receive the right support straight away. Kagan Structures are embedded in all classes across the school, resulting in a consistent approach to active learning that boosts pupils' confidence and promotes their social skills. High quality universal provision and support for pupils with SEND mean that fewer pupils require EHCPs. Pupils with the most complex needs participate in all areas of school life, including trips and clubs. For example, all pupils in The Nest were able to attend the pantomime with their peers.

School data show that disadvantaged pupils make better than expected progress. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) referrals have reduced due to an improved awareness of emotional needs and increased provision. A four year decline in writing outcomes by the end of Year 6 has been reversed and standards are now in line with the national average. Over four fifths of pupils are reading at or above their expected standard.

#### **Who is the staff lead in this area?**

**Name:** Annika Williams with support from Claire Garnett

**Title:** Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion / Headteacher

**Email address:** awilliams@juniper.school / headteacher@juniper.school

### **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 hub networks 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.



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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 network 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>).