



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR HOPE WOOD ACADEMY

<b>Name of School:</b>	Hope Wood Academy
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Adele Pearson
<b>Hub:</b>	North East Special
<b>School phase:</b>	Special
<b>MAT:</b>	Ascent

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	07/12/2022
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review:</b>	Leading
<b>Date of last QA Review:</b>	24/01/2022 (Virtual Quality Assurance Review)
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	11/09/2018



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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>	Effective
<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</b>	Not applicable
<b>Previously accredited valid areas of excellence</b>	Not applicable
<b>Overall peer evaluation estimate</b>	Effective

***The Quality Assurance Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades. The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is developmental not judgmental.***

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

Hope Wood is part of the Ascent Multi-Academies Trust, catering for students from the ages of 2 to 19 years. There are currently 226 students attending the academy. Most students come from Durham, but the academy also admits students from Stockton, Sunderland and Hartlepool.

The academy is growing and is still oversubscribed. Students follow a variety of academic and vocational pathways, in order to meet their needs.

All students have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). Two thirds of students have a primary diagnosis of autism, a fifth have severe learning difficulties. There are small minorities of students with moderate learning and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

The academy serves a local area with high levels of deprivation. Almost three quarters of students are disadvantaged. Hope Wood is a Gold, Rights Respecting School and an Anti-Bullying School. Hope Wood has attained many awards and accolades including Investors in People Silver status, Eco schools award and the Skills Builder bronze award.

Kindness, honesty and integrity underpin the academy's support of students and their families. Hope Wood has a mission to provide a welcoming, purposeful environment where young people can flourish because their rights, needs and aspirations are met.

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

- Leaders at Hope Wood have a clearly articulated high ambition for students, delivered with a strong moral purpose. Leaders are proactive and brave. They are not afraid to take considered risks to meet student need.
- Leaders identified six highly anxious students in Key Stage 3 and 4, who were unable to attend Hope Wood. Leaders, alongside the family liaison officer, set up the mobile education service, utilising multi-agency support. Learning is delivered in students' homes and community venues by an experienced teacher and teaching assistant. Attendance has already increased to around 20% since the start in September 2022.
- Over half of the wider leadership team are new to leadership, due in part to 'talent conversations,' which have encouraged leaders to step up. Senior leaders and trust colleagues deliver bespoke continuing professional development (CPD) and support, including 'Liberating Leadership'.

- Wider leaders undertake national professional qualifications, alongside coaching support and link with local networks. Insight and motivational maps are well used to understand each other's preferences and motivators.
- Thoughtfully planned, bespoke and highly effective CPD is greatly valued by staff, including regular Wednesday sessions for new staff and various academy and trust wide CPD and coaching to improve practice.
- Teaching assistants (TAs) and instructors have a clear career structure at Hope Wood. Home grown early career teachers (ECTs) have benefited from this structure to become teachers. They are well supported by personalised mentoring and coaching support in and beyond the academy.
- The new English and mathematics leaders have audited standards in their subjects, have credible action plans and are improving formative assessment in their subjects.
- Preparation for adulthood starts early in students' academy career. Leaders have developed useful partnerships with college and social care providers. Students develop travel training, community citizens, including volunteering and the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award. Hope Wood provides work experience within the academy. Hope Wood has level six careers leaders in their team.
- The sixth form building is offsite. Accreditation is carefully chosen. The curriculum is largely delivered in the community. Transitions to college after Key Stage 4 and after the sixth form are personalised and carefully planned. Students are well prepared for college and other destinations and tracking shows that they are successful and resilient in future placements.
- The cohesive student support team comprises an EHCP officer, safeguarding lead, behaviour support manager, speech and language assistant and family support officer. The team has supported the embedding of Emotion Coaching and Zones of Regulation, referring to trauma informed approaches. Emotion Coaching has significantly reduced the use of physical interventions and changed the culture of the academy for the better. Students benefit from a comprehensive tiered approach to their well-being.
- Curriculum conversations enhance professional dialogue between leaders at all levels with the ethos of 'doing with' not 'doing to,' supporting holistic quality assurance of the curriculum.

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

...subject leaders in all subjects continued to develop a detailed understanding of learning in all pathways and what progress looks like.

...curriculum documentation was further refined to explicitly recognise the vast range of learning opportunities in place that prepare young people for adulthood.

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

- Teaching staff have a deep knowledge of their students and subjects. Trusting relationships are a key feature of the academy. Students feel safe to express themselves and take risks in their learning. Conduct and behaviour for learning are exemplary.
- The culture of kindness and support is palpable. In the student voice meeting a student offered to teach a colleague how to tie their laces. In a mathematics lesson a student saw that a fellow student had made a mistake and suggested a new approach to the problem.
- Due to well thought out structures, routines and learning activities, students engage well with their learning. Transitions within and between classes are well organised and efficient.
- Support staff are enthusiastic and skilled. In an 'Attention Autism' session in a pre-primary class, TAs only intervened when necessary, ensuring that students focused on the teacher and the activity. In some classes, TAs skilfully lead learning.
- Students with ASCs benefit from consistent approaches and support. The Autism Education Trust framework is used to plan and set targets. Where appropriate Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communications Handicapped Children (TEACHH) is consistently utilised. The autism hub successfully supports some students who formerly exhibited severely challenging behaviour.
- Classroom environments are well thought out with visuals available, work stations, movement areas, sensory rooms and lower arousal areas in and between classrooms.
- Students take advantage of equipment to promote sensory processing. Students were observed sitting and bouncing on physio balls and using spinning chairs to support sensory regulation and focus.
- Teaching staff effectively promote phonics, reading and the love of reading. Students are involved in choosing motivating texts.
- In 2022 most students made at least good progress towards their EHCP short term targets. This is mirrored in academic progress data. Case studies, alongside evidence gathered on the online assessment and recording platform, strongly support this. Students gain relevant accreditation and make contributions to society, including becoming sports leaders and attaining the Duke of Edinburgh award and taking part in the community citizens programme.
- The 'Friday Signing Choir' was a wonderful whole phase celebration of community communication and joy.
- In the student voice meeting respectful and supportive students eloquently and unanimously stated that this is the best school for them. They feel valued, understood and listened to.

- Students particularly value the community citizenship programme where they build cultural capital and contribute to their communities. This includes volunteering in community settings, care homes, community cafes, laying wreaths on Remembrance Sunday and undertaking work and support in the academy. The student takeover day was a highlight to many students as they applied for roles and learned more about jobs and taking responsibility.
- The golden thread of a rights respecting school permeates Hope Wood. There is a great balance between rights and responsibility.

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

...all staff continued to develop a total communication environment.

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

- Most students are socially disadvantaged and all students have significant additional needs. There is evidence that some students and their families are still recovering from the effects of the Covid -19 pandemic. During this time leaders at all levels went above and beyond their remit to practically support students and their families.
- The Trust and academy leaders have a clear commitment to ensuring that issues around disadvantage are addressed, to facilitate maximum progress for all. The comprehensive action plan using research from the charity Children North East aims to 'poverty proof the school day'.
- Leaders develop cultural capital in all pathways with a clear community based focus. Students take opportunities such as community citizens, swimming and horse riding. Leaders broaden students' horizons and have developed a cultural capital calendar.
- Leaders surveyed parents and staff and have responded where appropriate. As a result all students are offered breakfast each morning. The focus on trips and community based activity has been reinforced.
- The family liaison officer and academy staff continue to engage and support parents. Attendance is similar for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.
- At Hope Wood the key issues around autism, trauma and attachment issues are well addressed. 'Emotion Coaching', sensory occupational therapy and speech and language input are improving outcomes.
- The curriculum includes Forest School and other highly motivating and relevant outdoor activities.

- As two thirds of the academy have ASCs, adopting approaches from the AET framework, TEACHH and developing enabling environments is supporting students' progress.
- As a result in 2022, in academic subjects and cognition there was no significant difference in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged counterparts.

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

... the range of autism expertise, which has been developed in the academy, was harnessed and shared with parents to ensure wider impact for students and their families.

#### **5. Area of Excellence**

Not applicable

#### **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 report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.

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.



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Schools can also attend Sharing Leading Practice (SLP) events where schools showcase excellent and/or innovative practice. Sharing Leading Practice events allow school leaders with specific improvement needs to visit a school or attend an online webinar hosted by a school, with outstanding provision in that area.

Both the School Support Directory and the Shared Leading Practice events 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>)