



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR ST. KATHERINE'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY

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| Name of School: | St Katherine's School and Nursery |
| Headteacher: | Ray Lang |
| Hub: | Impact Alliance Hub |
| School phase: | Primary |
| MAT (if applicable): | Coppice Primary Partnership |

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| Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review: | N/A |
| Date of this Review: | 22/04/2026 |
| Overall Estimate at last QA Review: | N/A |
| Date of last QA Review: | N/A |
| Grade at last Ofsted inspection: | Good |
| Date of last Ofsted inspection: | 30/01/2024 |

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
Achieving Personal Excellence
Through Our School Values

Previously accredited valid areas of excellence N/A

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

St Katherine's School and Nursery is a larger than average primary school located in Snodland, Kent. The school is transitioning from three-form entry to two-form entry and the Reception classes are now full for next year. The school has become a school of choice.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is just above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school is mainly White British so the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average. There are 14 ethnic minority groups.

The senior leadership team (SLT) comprises the headteacher, who is in his third year at the school, a deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers. The school has achieved the national 'Diversity Silver Award', the 'Young Carers in Schools Award', the 'Platinum School Games Mark' and the 'Gold Dog Mentor Award'.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Many key features make St Katherine's a special place. Shining through at every level is just how well every staff member, whatever their role, knows each pupil and family. This enables trusting relationships and personalised learning. The embedded school values underpin the aspirational direction and harmonious culture of the school.
- The school has been on a journey of rapid improvement, successfully tackling a legacy of underachievement spanning several years. The headteacher's inspiring energy is infectious and enthuses staff to go above and beyond for every pupil and family. The SLT drives improvement with passion and excitement, having a relentless quest for excellence in order that every pupil, regardless of any barriers, has the best possible future life chances. One SLT member said, 'We enjoy challenging each other!'
- In order to improve outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2, senior leaders are teaching groups to close historical knowledge gaps. The aim is that consistently high quality teaching enables pupils to keep up without the need to catch up. Consequently, outcomes are now close to national averages.
- A culture of pride and dedication greets visitors, from the site manager's welcome in the car park to the friendly support from the office staff. The site manager praised the changes that the headteacher had implemented, saying, 'We are all on the journey with him.' Leaders are open and honest role models, reflecting the 'radical candour' that the headteacher speaks so proudly of.

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- Mathematics has been one of the school's key priorities. The mathematics leader has extended the mathematics leadership team which has increased leadership skills and built capacity. Leaders have attended the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) Maths hub, and planning is collaborative. The mathematics team enjoys leading professional development meetings (PDMs) and feedback from staff has been extremely positive.
- Leaders are outward facing and levels of mutual support are high. Staff visit other schools and undertake national professional qualifications. 'Steplab' supports the principles of effective teaching and learning, the result of which is more consistently high quality pedagogy. Best practice is shared, including videoing parts of lessons to extend understanding and confidence. Leaders maximise the expertise of external consultants, such as those for Talk for Writing.
- Middle leaders are actively involved in monitoring and evaluation, using Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance effectively, and this is building sustainability. Coaching is developing subject knowledge, leadership skills and pedagogical excellence. Leadership capacity is building through subject leaders sharing action plans with governors and leaders of learning for each year group using emotional intelligence to take increasing responsibility. One subject leader remarked, 'We all support each other; no-one judges anyone here.'
- Capacity is also built through weekly training for learning support assistants (LSAs) who also attend Inservice Training (INSET) days. Higher Learning Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) attend every PDM.
- The Trust undertakes termly quality assurance reviews and the SLT values highly the supportive, yet challenging, visits from the chief executive officer (CEO) and director of education.
- The SLT models a healthy life/work balance: 'Family comes first'. The Personal Pause is a half day that staff take for personal use.
- The attendance team is relentless in ensuring that pupils attend regularly and the family liaison officer and the special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) work closely together, as well as with external agencies. Leaders are entrepreneurial in their approach and incentives and rewards include newsletters, pool parties and free Leisure Centre vouchers. Consequently, attendance has risen and persistent absence has decreased.
- Relationships with parents are characterised by warmth and mutual respect, with staff and leaders engaging in daily, meaningful interactions. Workshops are well attended. Parents spoken with could not speak highly enough of the impact St Katherine's has on their children. Typical comments included 'Every child is seen, heard, known and valued.' 'Mr. Lang cares about every child as much as the class teachers.'

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- The enrichment programme enhances cultural capital, including a Year 6 residential to Kingswood and religious education visits to places of worship, including a synagogue.

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

... leaders built capacity within the pupil leadership structure by enabling younger pupils to shadow current ambassadors to:

- a) provide opportunities to learn more about what the different roles entail before formal application
- b) have new ambassadors in place for the start of the next academic year.

... leaders reviewed and explored the efficiency, purpose and impact of pupil progress meetings.

... middle/subject leaders capitalised on the high quality challenge and support they receive from the SLT in order that, over time, they drive improvements with increasing autonomy, confidence and independence.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- High expectations reflect the ambition staff have for their pupils. Staff are proud to work at St Katherine's and of the privileged roles they covet. Consistency of pedagogy has improved, and this is having a positive impact on outcomes, which have, historically, been below national averages for several years.
- The vibrant cross-curricular learning environment both celebrates and challenges. For example, ambitious career ideas, such as accountant and author, sparks pupils' curiosity in the display 'Where can your learning take you?'
- Phonics is well taught, reflected in secure leadership, training from consultants and rising outcomes to just above the national average. In Reception classes, pupils engaged with the well-established routines, such as robot-arms, with enthusiasm and demonstrated confident phonic knowledge.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides a stimulating and nurturing learning environment that includes inviting continuous provision activities to develop early speaking, listening, reading and writing. Child initiated learning is actively encouraged which supports the development of behaviours for learning.

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- For example, Nursery children independently took turns and selected scissors when making potions from the book 'Room on the Broom.' Strong adult interactions in Reception supported oracy in the outdoor area.
- Secure subject knowledge is reflected in the quality of the curriculum which is well sequenced and aligned across subjects. Staff plan exciting activities that provoke interest. Pupils use subject specific vocabulary, displayed on working walls, such as, 'This is a reversible change' in a Key Stage 2 science lesson.
- Manipulatives and visual representations help pupils make connections, for example between fractions and decimals, enabling them to solve problems and understand abstract concepts. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, relentless, yet supportive, questioning made pupils think deeply and helped their articulation of understanding, for example, explaining the difference between 'one hundred and one hundredth'.
- One of the key features of teaching and learning is the exceptional behaviours for learning that pupils consistently demonstrate on a daily basis. The school values underpin how pupils learn and they support life skills. A Year 1 pupil explained, 'I need to be respectful when looking at my partner's work so that they don't feel sad.' A 'culture of error' enables pupils to learn from mistakes in a supportive environment. One parent spoke of her son's pride at receiving a 'Rocko Resilience' postcard through the post from the headteacher, saying, 'It'll probably stay on the fridge forever!'
- Oracy is embedded across subjects and pupils use 'agree, build and challenge' stem sentences to actively discuss their learning. This extends their skills and deepens their understanding. The impact of Talk Partners supports learning and progress because pupils actively listen and contribute to collaborative discussion.
- The wealth of opportunities for pupils to be ambassadors ensures that there is a role for everyone! Roles include ambassador for sports council, reading, community, well-being warrior, pupil leadership and diversity. One pupil said, 'I like helping people in the community, like when we did the Easter raffle.' Pupil leaders attended a debate in Tonbridge council chambers. The diversity ambassador said, 'Everyone is different in unique ways.' Ambassadors led assemblies on Black History month. Pupils introduced Book Nooks to encourage pupils to take books home, saying, 'Reading helps you to speak and write fluently.'
- Pupils demonstrated the actions associated with each value and could articulate their importance both at school and at home. They described the headteacher as 'caring, encouraging, fair, kind and firm'.

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

- ... pupils' articulation of their thinking and opinions matched the quality of the impact of Talk Partners.

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... checking for understanding, particularly for vulnerable pupils, was more frequent and consistent so that misconceptions are addressed at the point of learning.

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

- The inclusive ethos of the school is a key strength. Pupils' participation in enrichment activities, including clubs such as Milo colouring club, art and sports clubs, is tracked forensically to ensure all barriers are overcome. For example, pupils' interest in Formula One sparked a visit to the Formula One Centre.
- Pupils in these categories engage just as keenly as their classmates and it is difficult to identify who are disadvantaged and who have SEND. One boy with SEND proudly showed a visitor his work, saying, 'I am on my fourth book!'
- A vertical intervention system maximises impact on pupils' achievement, and adaptations such as visual timetables, along with strategies such as targeted questioning, give pupils the confidence to suggest ideas, explain processes and ask their own questions. On-going professional dialogue enables staff to share and refine their practice, ensuring that adaptive teaching remains both responsive and impactful.
- A robust system ensures that pupils are identified in a timely way and parents praised the way that leaders 'do not wait for a diagnosis before supporting.'
- Leaders and staff maximise the expertise of external agencies, including the educational psychologist, speech and language services and Early Help, to access bespoke resources and support individual pupils and families.
- Leaders arrange SEND coffee mornings and parents have access to a lending library, for example to increase their knowledge about autism.
- A range of bespoke strategies support pupils' attendance and well-being, including Milo, the dog mentor, the Nurture room, the sensory circuits room, soft starts, one to one support and self-regulation resources. One Year 5 pupil rejoined his class for mathematics after independently self-regulating.
- Parents of children with SEND spoken with praised the high quality of leadership and support their children receive at St Katherine's. Comments included, 'My child is thriving.' 'My child is valued for who he is.' 'The nurture room and Forest School have helped my child belong.'
- Blossom class is a calm, nurturing space where pupils' learning is enhanced. For example, one-to-one support enabled pupils to progress, including matching 'cvc' words and 'spot the difference' activities. Pupils were focused, settled and learning. Sensory circuits and the nurture room are used effectively.

- Disadvantaged pupils' participation in clubs and enrichment is tracked carefully to overcome any unknown barriers. Disadvantaged pupils have access to the full curriculum offer.
- The partnership with Five Acre Wood Special School, which rents three classrooms onsite, opens up unique opportunities for pupils to socialise and learn together.

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

... the attendance of pupils with SEND in enrichment activities was tracked with the same rigour applied to disadvantaged pupils, ensuring that any emerging or unknown barriers to participation can be identified and addressed.

5. Area of Excellence

Achieving Personal Excellence Through Our School Values:

Accredited

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

St Katherine's values-driven approach is grounded in research and embedded through whole-school professional frameworks. The EEF's guidance on Improving Behaviour in Schools highlights the importance of consistent expectations, positive reinforcement and relational practice — all central to the school's values model and reflected in the rapid improvement in behaviour and learning habits. Reward systems and restorative approaches help pupils recognise, reflect on and internalise their behaviours, strengthening self-regulation and reinforcing shared expectations.

The values are fully integrated into the St Katherine's Excellence Frameworks, which define the 'St Kath's Way' across all aspects of school life, ensuring shared understanding and consistent enactment by every member of staff. This results in values being highly visible in classrooms, corridors, assemblies, leadership structures and the wider school environment.

The values-driven approach is highly transferable because it is built on practical tools and clear frameworks that other schools can adopt.

Leaders have shared their key reflection forms, adapted versions and accompanying analysis with other schools within the Trust and local collaborative, supporting schools to reflect on their own behaviour culture, restorative practice and pupil self-regulation. Leaders have modelled how these tools guide conversations, analyse patterns and embed consistent expectations. Leaders have also contributed to Initial Teacher Education, with pupils joining the headteacher to lecture final-year students at the University of Greenwich on 'Why a school's curriculum should matter to you?', exploring how values shape the hidden curriculum.

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

The school values have driven a rapid and sustained improvement in behaviour, learning habits and school culture. Since September 2023, suspensions have significantly reduced and positive behaviour for learning has sharply increased.

Pupils demonstrate resilience, ambition and strong learning behaviours, articulating how values help them persevere and challenge themselves. Leadership roles enable pupils to make 'a tangible difference to the life of the school'. Achievement of the Silver Diversity Mark provides evidence of the strength of the inclusive, values-driven culture.

A deep sense of belonging is fostered through the 'community' value, reflected in the Young Carers Award and national recognition through Pearson Awards for staff who embody compassion and excellence. Parent voice confirms that pupils apply values at home, modelling positive behaviours beyond school.

This Area of Excellence has also informed wider improvement across St Katherine's. As behaviour and culture strengthened, teaching has shifted towards greater pupil ownership, with a strong emphasis on oracy, discussion and collaborative learning. This has improved engagement, is beginning to deepen thinking and created a more balanced, dialogic learning culture across the school.

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

Ray Lang: Headteacher headteacher@st-katherines.kent.sch.uk saikenhead@st-katherines.kent.sch.uk

Sarah Aikenhead: Personal Development Lead

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>).