

Name of School:	The Grove School
Headteacher/Principal:	Lucia Santis
Hub:	London AP Special
School phase:	All through special (5 - 19)
MAT (if applicable):	The SEARCH Education Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leaders chose not to have estimates.
Date of this Review:	03/05/2023
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Effective
Date of last QA Review	28/03/2022
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	28/02/2023

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers, agree 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 pupils with additional
needs**

Area of excellence N/A

**Previously accredited valid areas
of excellence** N/A

Overall peer evaluation estimate N/A

***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

The Grove is a free school, one of two in the SEARCH Educational trust. The SEARCH values are support, empathy, acceptance, compassion and honesty. The school is designated for autistic pupils and all have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). There are 125 pupils, half of whom are disadvantaged. Most come from the London Borough of Haringey and the school is part of the local authority SEND offer. The school admits pupils from Year 1. There are two sections of the school: East, for those more able who follow a subject-based formal curriculum leading to qualifications at GCSE level; and West for Key Stage 1 and 2 and those with more significant needs. There are five curriculum pathways. The school uses positive behaviour support (PBS) training and approach to support pupils' responses to anxiety and sensory input.

The school employs an occupational therapist, speech therapist and specialist assistants. There are also art and music therapists. Leaders designed the timetable of the review to focus on computing and information and communication technology (ICT).

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Leaders work exceptionally well as a team. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and exercised by the leaders. The school values are clearly evident in all aspects of the school. All leaders are ambitious to continually improve provision for the benefit of pupils, who are at the heart of all decisions, practices and processes.
- Leaders work with subject leads to evaluate the quality of teaching accurately through learning walks. Leaders use incremental coaching to improve teachers' skills and this has led to rapid improvements for staff early in their careers. Senior leaders work extremely well with middle leaders, for example, in developing the assessment frameworks. Coaching is at the core of the excellent team work.
- The curriculum and assessment pathways are continually being refined and developed by middle and senior leaders. They have worked together to provide schemes of work and medium-term plans for all subjects that ensure pupils have full access to the national curriculum. For example, the English lead has adapted national curriculum requirements for Key stage 3 pupils to study pre-1914 literature by using 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Frankenstein'. Teachers creatively adapt these for the needs of pupils on pathway 1.

- Leaders ensure that all staff have the time they need to carry out their responsibilities. Senior leaders cover classes to enable subject leaders to carry out monitoring through learning walks. Senior leaders are continually encouraging and building capacity in the wider leadership. Leaders explained how the curriculum development team meetings have significantly supported their professional development.
- The computing leader has carefully chosen an accreditation that meets needs from entry level 1 to level 2 GCSEs. She has worked with the examiners to write modules that suit the specific interests of pupils so that they can achieve at the highest level possible for them. In lessons, carefully designed activities enable pupils to be independently successful and do not limit their achievements.
- Leaders ensure that all pupils' opinions are considered. They work well with school council representatives from each class. Pupils understand that they represent the opinions of their friends. Pupils have recently contributed to a review of ICT provision within the school and made helpful suggestions for new equipment. Pupils enthusiastically describe how they are involved in work experience and what they have found out during careers week.

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

... leaders continued to develop teachers as leaders of class teams.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Teachers use attention autism techniques to enable younger pupils to focus and be ready to learn. In a primary class, for example, the teacher skilfully used a range of powered toys in the bucket session, emphasising switches and 'on' and 'off' vocabulary. Pupils then used digital cameras that they learnt to switch on for themselves.
- Teachers creatively use the medium-term planning and schemes of work for subjects to plan highly engaging lessons that significantly motivate pupils. The class teams know individual pupils really well. Teachers plan the sequence of lessons to build on the small steps of learning. Pupils show this through their knowledge of routines and evidence of prior learning demonstrating their progression in knowledge and skills.

- Support staff know individual pupils well. They 'read' small nuances of pupils' demeanour that enable them to take proactive action to support pupils' self-regulation. They question more-able pupils carefully to enable them to complete tasks independently.
- Staff have been well trained by the speech therapists to use all forms of total communication that enable pupils to participate. They use Makaton signing, consistent symbolled communication boards and specific vocabulary to facilitate this highly successfully. For example, teachers used visual support such as photographs to enable younger pupils on the semi-formal pathway to determine whether a photograph is in portrait or landscape format.
- Teachers manage transitions during and between lessons effectively taking into account the particular needs of the pupils. For example, with younger pupils, songs indicate changes that need to happen for the start of the next activity.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They teach essential key vocabulary and model tasks well. In the sixth form, pupils worked on appropriate tasks that supported them in accessing, and modelled to them, what would happen in an IT entry level exam. Teachers set tasks that are relevant and cross-curricular, for example, creating posters to promote healthy schools. Sixth formers work independently, collecting laptops, logging on and accessing email instructions and understanding their timetable.
- The curriculum is very well designed to incorporate essential life skills and prepare pupils well for adulthood, build independence and how to keep themselves safe. Younger pupils for example, when learning how to use digital cameras, learnt that they needed to ask their friends' permission before they took pictures of them.
- The PBS team is led by the pastoral support lead. She tracks all concerns and incidents of pupils' adverse responses. Ten practitioners are specifically trained to support pupils and they are given time to support their work with individual pupils as part of their other roles. Since PBS has been implemented the incidents of physical intervention have declined significantly.

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

... leaders continued to enable staff to observe and share the best practice.

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

- All pupils have additional needs and many are disadvantaged. Leaders analyse school data and the cohort make-up regularly to check the progress of sub-groups who may be more disadvantaged than others. For example, comparing the achievement of pupils with a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder with their peers. Data analysis shows that disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium make better progress than their peers.
- The multi-disciplinary team comprising pastoral leads, all the therapists and assistant head meet regularly to systematically review pupils' needs in each class. Occupational and speech therapists assess the needs of all pupils in the school. They provide training for class teams and ensure that sensory and communication needs of all pupils are at the forefront of well adapted teaching. For example, the consistency of style and use of communication boards facilitates pupils' language development throughout the school.
- Occupational therapy support is built into pupils' daily activities. Pupils access movement and sensory breaks at any time. Younger pupils access well-designed 'sensory circuits' when they arrive at school. Older pupils go to the outdoor gym equipment when they first arrive at school to regulate themselves. Rooms equipped with items that support self-regulation, such as trampolines and large balls, are known as the 'Body Shop' and pupils request to use these at anytime by using symbols on the door.
- The systems and processes that leaders have put in place ensure that any additional support for pupils and their families is targeted highly successfully. Music or art therapy is provided for individuals and on occasion can include parents too.

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

None were identified by the review team.

5. Area of Excellence

Not submitted for this review.

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.

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>)