Name of School:	Abbeyfield School
Head teacher:	Ian Tucker
Hub:	Wootton Bassett
School type:	Community School
MAT (if applicable):	N/A

Estimate at this QA Review:	Good
Date of this QA review	19-21 February 2018
Estimate at last QA Review	Good
Date of last QA Review	3-5 March 2016
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	15-16 March 2017

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	Good
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Good
Area of Excellence	Sixth Form Achievement Intervention and Tracking Accredited
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Provision for Vulnerable Learners
Overall Estimate	Good

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. Information about the school

- Abbeyfield is a smaller than average 11-18 community school supported by Wiltshire local authority. In recent years, the school roll has expanded significantly with a growing sixth form currently consisting of 146 pupils.
- The principal was appointed in 2014 and is supported by an extended leadership team.
- The school includes a much smaller than average proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is significantly below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below that found nationally and is highest in Year 11. The school is characterised as having an average indication of deprivation.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below the national average; numbers with an education and health care plan (EHCP) are slightly are above. The school includes a number of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- A small proportion of the pupil population are from service families.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Follow up from previous review

Leaders have implemented a digital school improvement package which is enquiry based and includes a series of questions designed to inform the design of precise success criteria. These questions have enabled the team to identify key actions derived from the two specific priorities for action: improving consistency and building resilience. At regular intervals, senior leaders carefully track progress against their list of actions. The drive to improve levels of consistency in teaching, learning and assessment is highlighted for all teachers and informs the carefully planned programme of continuing professional development.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Leaders express a clear and ambitious vision for the sustained success of the school. They are highly reflective and plan strategically in response to two clear and well-chosen priorities.
- Leadership roles have been well defined and responsibilities articulated in response to specific strategic and operational demands. There is a clear sense of a team working together to achieve a common purpose. Rigorous line

management arrangements ensure that middle and senior leaders are held to account.

- As a result of this energetic leadership, outcomes for pupils are rapidly improving. Leaders have set ambitious targets to move the school into the top quintile of the highest performing schools.
- Leaders have developed an innovative approach to the improvement of outcomes for the most vulnerable learners. A conference-led approach enables leaders to identify barriers to learning and plan appropriate interventions. It is clear that Abbeyfield is a highly inclusive school with effective provision for the most able pupils as well as those with learning difficulties.
- A highly effective senior leader energetically drives the strategic focus on disadvantaged pupils. All stakeholders are clear about their role in delivering a range of actions including a 'best and first' classroom focus and a well-designed extra-curricular dimension.
- Leaders have developed a strong strategic focus on literacy which includes a classroom focus on the development of oracy and communication skills. Together with the literacy champion, the librarian has introduced a range of initiatives including the well-regarded Accelerated Reader programme, book clubs and author focus events.
- The school has developed a thoughtful approach to partnership work which is helping the school to ensure that best practice is shared and pedagogy is research-informed. The school is a member of the North Wiltshire Teaching Schools Alliance and has made effective use of Olevi programmes to develop leadership capacity.
- Strong strategic leadership of the sixth form is enabling the school to secure the future of a thriving Key Stage 5. Leaders have invested in an effective tutorial system and are closely tracking pupil progress. Well-designed interventions help to catch pupils at risk of falling behind. A comprehensive programme of careers information and guidance is also helping to increase recruitment into the sixth form and to ensure strong destinations.
- The school has developed a tangible culture of professional learning with a range of opportunities for teachers to learn from their peers. Middle leaders are well supported and work collaboratively to meet the needs of pupils.
- The school benefits from a range of high quality learning resources and a spacious environment. Subject areas include bespoke contemporary facilities.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum built around their needs and interests including art, design and performing arts disciplines. Extra-curricular opportunities are many and varied, including a range of trips and clubs.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if…

… middle leaders were given further opportunities to engage in best practice sharing and research beyond their immediate context in order to strengthen quality assurance.

… leaders continued to explore the possibilities represented by partnership work in order to respond to the challenges of scaling the school.

3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Follow up from previous review

Since the last review teachers have benefitted from a range of training opportunities, including the discussion of strategies for developing pupils' oracy and confidence in debating ideas. There is evidence of some effective practice in the use of questioning to develop and extend pupils' thinking although leaders are clear that there is further work to do to improve the level of consistency.

It is clear that leaders have a forensic understanding of assessment information on pupils' progress and attainment. In the most effective lessons, teachers use their knowledge of pupils to plan tasks which meet their needs. Quality assurance processes now need to be further refined in order to ensure that all staff are confident in their use of data to plan differentiated learning sequences.

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

- Teachers display strong subject knowledge which informs the effective use of subject-specific language.
- There is significant evidence of strong working relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils. Staff express high expectations for conduct and behaviour and promote positive learning conversations and attitudes to learning.
- There are some good examples of pupil-led learning and high levels of participation. The well-led English department is evidently committed to the development of an ethos of speaking, listening and debate.
- In sixth form lessons, students demonstrate high levels of leadership and a good level of engagement. Planning is clearly designed to challenge and inspire and students are focussed and enthusiastic about their studies.
- Teachers use the school reward system of 'pings' to motivate pupils and promote competitive spirit. In modern foreign languages, for example, teachers use

quizzes to consolidate knowledge and understanding, awarding 'pings' when pupils extend their responses in the target language.

- In the best lessons, teachers use higher-order questions to probe and develop pupils' thinking. Targeted questioning is also used to build confidence and resilience.
- Around the school, pupils benefit from well-equipped and purposeful classroom environments. Teachers make good use of displays and working walls to promote understanding.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers use seating plans to direct and support pupils' learning. Where planning is carefully sequenced, appropriately scaffolded and suitably differentiated, pace is rapid and progress accelerates.
- The introduction of the 'brain, book, buddy' system is designed to improve independence and resilience amongst pupils. Teachers pay close attention to literacy by ensuring that key words are highlighted
- In most Key Stage 4 and 5 lessons, teachers direct pupils to the demands of specification assessment objectives and criteria. In these lessons, pupils take full advantage of the opportunities to engage in self-assessment and cooperative learning.
- Where pupils are asked to commit to improvement in their writing they demonstrate understanding of the use of self and peer assessment strategies, including 'DIRT' time and modelled examples of success.
- In every subject, the school has developed detailed assessment maps which are skills focussed. Teachers make frequent reference to them as a tool for checking misconceptions and consolidating subject-specific knowledge and understanding.
- The most effective teachers are using school protocols for marking and feedback to provide focussed next step targets and promote the use of 'my response is…'. In the best pupil books, there is evidence of self-assessment and an effective level of challenge for pupils.

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

…teachers used a broader range of questioning strategies to enhance and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

…there was enhanced consistency in the use of marking and feedback protocols to provide meaningful next steps for pupils.

…teachers' planning was more precisely differentiated to match pupils' different starting points.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- In 2017, the school achieved a Progress 8 score which was broadly in line with the national average and a slight drop from the previous year. The school's Attainment 8 score was also in line with the national average for all prior-attaining groups. On both headline measures, disadvantaged pupils performed less favourably although attainment of this group of pupils was the highest in the county.

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved Grades 4 and 5 on the combined measure for English and mathematics was greater than the national average. There was a year on year increase in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils since 2014.

- The Progress 8 and Attainment 8 scores for English and mathematics put the school in the top two quintiles. Lower prior attainers and disadvantaged pupils performed less favourably, with a number of 'outliers' affecting these scores.

- In the Ebacc measure, the cohort achieved a Progress 8 score just below the national average with an improvement on the previous year, particularly for higher prior attainers. However, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was significantly below the national average.

- In the 'Open element' of Progress 8, outcomes were less strong although they improved on the previous year. Lower prior attaining pupils and those who are disadvantaged also made less strong progress.

- The value-added scores for science and languages have fluctuated over recent years. In general, higher prior attainers made more progress, with a clear gap between the performance of these pupils and disadvantaged pupils.

- In humanities, the school achieved a value-added score which placed them in the top quintile of schools nationally, with strong improvements for all pupil groups.

- In 2017, the small cohort of SEND pupils achieved a Progress 8 score lower than their peers nationally. On other measures, including the Ebacc, the gap in performance narrowed.

- At Key Stage 5 in 2017, value-added was significantly above the national average and in the top 10% of schools for Advanced level. For disadvantaged pupils, value-added was significantly above average and in the top 10% of schools. 100% of pupils achieved A*-E grades, with 50% of pupils achieving A*-B. As fewer pupils achieved the highest grades, the average overall grade was a C. The average progress score for retake mathematics and English was pleasing.

- Retention between Years 12 and 13 is exceptionally strong and the vast majority of pupils progress onto further education, training or employment.

- Attendance is in line with the national average, with levels of persistent absence slightly higher than the national average. The school has fewer instances of fixed term exclusions than the national average.
- Current data suggests that the school will achieve enhanced Progress 8 and Attainment 8 scores. The progress across the curriculum of disadvantaged and SEND pupils is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.

5. Area of Excellence: Sixth Form Pupils

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength?

Over the last three years, the school has steadily improved the progress and attainment of sixth form students. Although the average Advanced level point score puts the school in the middle of the county league table, in 2017 the school achieved the highest progress score of the 8 comprehensive schools in North Wiltshire. For disadvantaged pupils, value-added was significantly above the national average and in the top 10% of schools nationally for Advanced level outcomes.

The sixth form has undergone a significant rebranding exercise which was student-led and designed to emphasise the symbiotic characteristics of independence and affiliation with the wider school. Leaders have identified and promoted the affirmatory message 'I can' over the less energetic 'I did'. The strategic review of provision was framed by the use of the 'keep, grow, change' model. Curriculum innovations have been widely welcomed by students and the school has significantly increased levels of retention of students into the sixth form. The vast majority of Year 12 students also remain in the school for Year 13. The school has had some success in developing a collaborative curriculum model with other local schools and has seen an improvement in the uptake of STEM subjects and the protection of subjects which attract smaller numbers of students. At the point of application, all students are matched to an appropriate curriculum pathway based on their emergent career aspirations.

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

Leaders have invested significantly in the development of a tutorial system which has been embedded into every curriculum area. The model is designed to promote the skills of independent study and research required at higher levels of study and is overseen by the head of sixth form, with teachers acting in a facilitation role. Middle leaders are held tightly to account for the progress and attainment of sixth form students. A rigorous quality assurance process enables leaders to identify barriers to learning and plan age-appropriate interventions. More able students are identified through the school's 'AIM' strategy and mentored by carefully chosen members of staff. The Extended Project

Qualification is also embedded into the study programme offer and has been embraced enthusiastically by students.

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

Outcomes in both Advanced Level and vocational subjects are very strong, with particularly robust value-added scores in humanities, social sciences and English. Although the school has fewer students who achieve the highest grades, current data suggests that the average grade is likely to improve. The school has been particularly successful in moving the vast majority of students onto positive destinations. The tutor team share responsibility for ensuring the quality of impartial information and guidance and for supporting the development of strong employability skills and awareness of the demands of the labour market.

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

Contact: Ian Tucker
Email: iph@abbeyfield.wilts.sch.uk

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

The headteacher would like to reflect on the areas for improvement identified in this report. In partnership with other members of the Hub, leaders are seeking opportunities to disseminate best practice.

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.