



SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL[®]



CHALLENGE PARTNERS REVIEW
NOVEMBER 2019



‘Challenge Partners enables collaboration between schools to enhance the life chances of all children in an ever-changing world’



Dear Trustees and Governors

It is with great pride that I present to you Springfield School's Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review Report for 2019. We are pleased that the expert review team again found the work of the school to be 'effective' across the board. Each member of the team was able to identify a number of areas of good practice that they would be taking back to their own organisation.

Challenge Partners have changed their evaluation descriptors as a result of Ofsted having recently changed its approach to inspecting schools. 'Leadership at all levels' and 'The Quality of Provision and Outcomes' are now the key foci and these are evaluated on a four scale system of: 'leading', 'effective', 'working towards effective' and 'ineffective'.

As you will recall, Challenge Partners is an education charity, led by practitioners, through which schools collaborate to improve each other and the education system as a whole, so all children benefit. Challenge Partners schools benefit from:


- annual peer review and knowledge exchange
- training in key leadership skills and competencies
- sharing innovative practice online and at local and national events
- working with business and other charities to learn from other sectors
- bespoke programmes to reduce gaps in educational achievement and to extend excellence

The Quality Assurance Review took place over three days (13th-15th November 2019). Review activities included joint learning explorations and lesson observations, pupil voice interviews, meetings with senior and middle leaders and detailed scrutiny of the school's GCSE results and other key performance indicators. The Review Team was directed by Mr A Foster, an Ofsted-experienced Lead Reviewer and consisted of the Principal of an 11-16 school in Leicester, the Vice Principal of an 11-16 school in Bootle, the Assistant Headteacher of an 11-16 academy in London and the Assistant Headteacher of an outstanding 11-18 college in Bristol.

This encouraging and extremely positive report reflects the vision, commitment and hard work of the leaders and teachers within the school to provide the very best education that they can for the children in our community. I thank them sincerely for what they do on behalf of our school community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S Spivey'.

Sara Spivey
CEO, The De Curci Trust
Headteacher, Springfield School

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a black school sweater over a white collared shirt and a red tie, is smiling and looking down. In the background, a female teacher with blonde hair is blurred, looking towards the boy. The scene is set in a classroom with a red wall.

**‘There is a clear focus
on improving teachers’
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1. Context and character of the school

Springfield is a larger than average, non-selective secondary school, serving the communities of Drayton and Cosham, four miles north of Portsmouth's city centre. The school independently formed a multi-academy trust with two local schools (one infant and one junior) in April 2017. The school is a founding academy of The De Curci Trust.

Most pupils are of White British heritage, and the proportion that speak English as an additional language (EAL) is below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is also below average but has been increasing. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is slightly above the national average. Pupils begin their GCSE subjects in Year 9, and a large proportion take up the EBacc offer.

The school actively promotes improvement across the wider system through a range of successful partnerships including with local businesses and the teaching school alliance, as well as with Portsmouth and Chichester Universities and the Portsmouth Educational Partnership.

2.1 Leadership at all levels – What went well

- The EBIs from the last review have been addressed.
- Senior leaders hold a strong and clear vision for inclusive and ambitious education at the school. They provide excellent strategic direction, working closely as a team to provide excellent opportunities for all learners, and promote high aspirations and outcomes. Senior leaders work with dedication to instil a positive and aspirational ethos. Governance is strong, and teachers feel supported and have high morale.
- The headteacher is clear that the school serves children who live in the community, and that learning should be enjoyable. She has created a positive and inclusive culture and ethos and is selfless in her drive for the success of her pupils. Leaders are tenacious in their support of vulnerable children and their families and are absolutely committed to closing the gap for all learners. Leaders and teachers go the extra mile to ensure that students have opportunities to access a wide range of rich and varied enrichment opportunities. These experiences strengthen the school's overall curriculum offer.
- There is a clear focus on improving teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogy, and a culture of professional development, as teachers work hard to be the best they can for their pupils. Several middle leaders are undertaking more advanced training, building leadership capacity in the school. There is increasingly an "open door" policy in the school, with teachers keen to share best practice.
- Middle leaders are strong, driving curriculum thinking and improvement. As a result, pupils make progress over time. Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3, with a positive take up of EBacc subjects at GCSE.



‘Personal development lessons build pupils’ character, and leaders ensure that the wellbeing of their pupils goes hand in hand with academic aspirations’

- There are strong enrichment opportunities, leading to excellent preparation for the next stage of pupils' education. This includes personalised programmes of study, such as construction and hair and beauty. There is also a positive take up of a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Personal development lessons build pupils' character, and leaders ensure that the wellbeing of their pupils goes hand in hand with academic aspirations. Pupils understand their role in modern Britain, and celebrate diversity and equality, for example in Black History Month and Stonewall education.
- School leaders work hard to enhance learning through community engagement. The school has worked hard to gain parental involvement, for example offering study skills evenings for parents to attend.

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

...there was a review of the curriculum offered to pupils, with a view to include more vocational courses for some students.

...the planned development of "character education" was embedded and promoted further the ethical, intellectual, social and emotional development of all pupils.

...teachers organised and engaged in "open door" teaching events across different curriculum areas in the school.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Curriculum planning is strong. Professional development has led to an effectively sequenced curriculum. Curriculum mapping has a clear rationale, and the school curriculum is ambitious, broad and balanced. Students make options choices in Year 8 which are informed by guidance offered by the school.
- Teachers show strong subject knowledge, as well as a real love for their subject, and provide additional Period 6 revision for their pupils. Teachers are skilled at giving progressively more demanding work to their pupils. They work hard to make lessons challenging and enjoyable for their pupils.
- There are positive routines in place to ensure recall and recollection, for example in the "do now" starter activity, and in the use of targeted questioning.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to learn independently and are resilient learners. For example, in a technology lesson, students were able to complete an enjoyable team activity to find and use subject specific key words.
- Pupils take pride in their work, and books are generally well presented. Regular marking and feedback by teachers helps pupils to make further progress.
- Literacy is promoted across the curriculum. Reading is prioritised in form tutor time, and in the Accelerated Reading scheme for years 7 and 8 pupils. Pupils are able to 'drop everything and read', to enhance the status of reading. Students are taught fast paced reading in order to make links between texts. Younger pupils value reading to older students and spoke highly of how much they enjoyed this activity.
- A love of reading is encouraged, and students regularly engage in debates and discussions in class. Pupils also develop their literacy and numeracy skills in form tutor time.



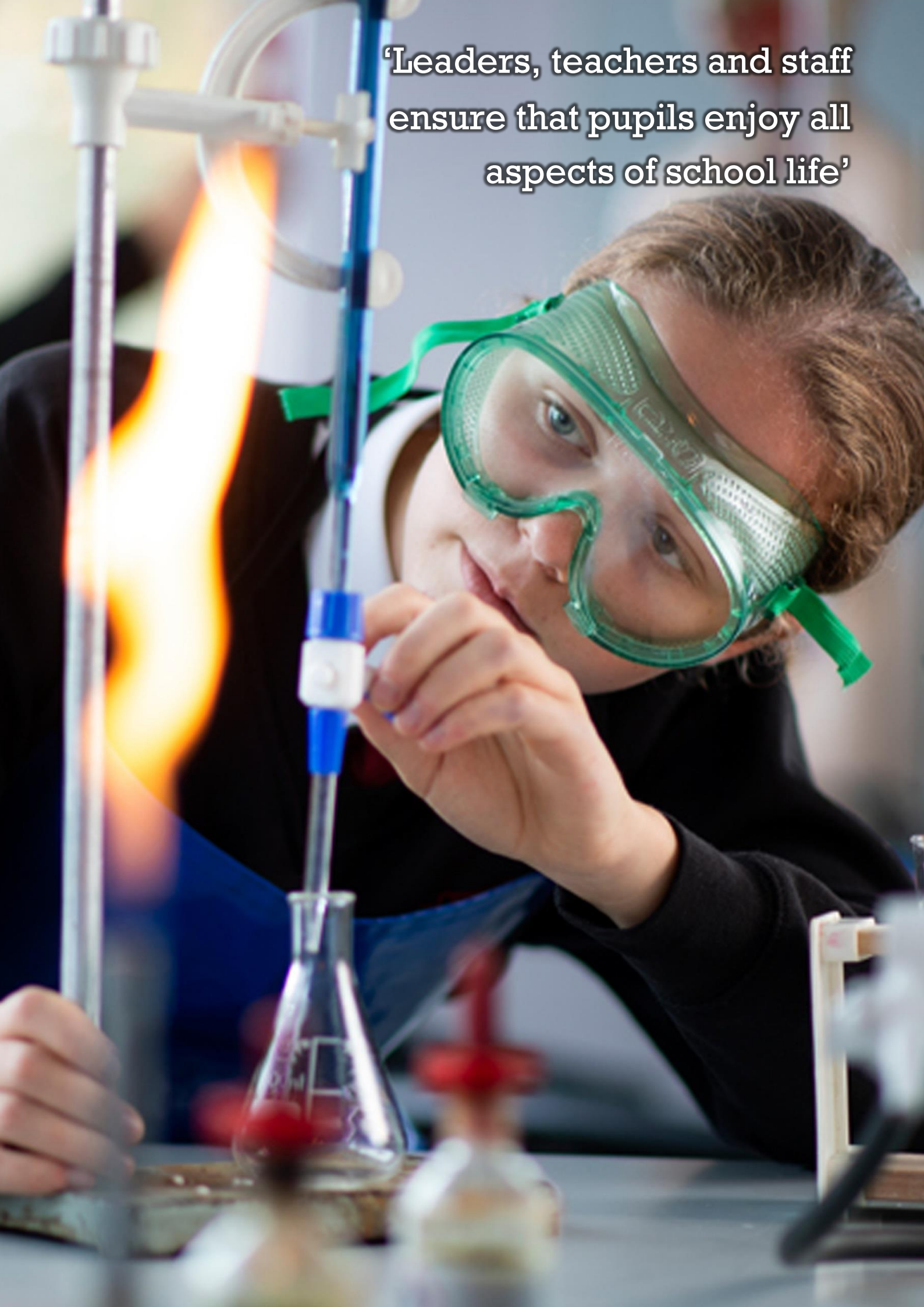
‘A love of reading is encouraged, and students regularly engage in debates and discussions in class’

- Pupils receive high quality careers education and guidance, and they make informed choices. The vast majority go on to appropriate higher education courses, reflecting the aspirational ethos of the school.
- The school continues to demonstrate strong GCSE results. In 2019, 45% of pupils achieved a strong pass in English and Maths combined, above national and local achievement. 66% achieved a secure pass in these subjects, again above national and local averages.
- School leaders have high ambitions for their pupils. The majority of 2019 students took up the EBacc offer. This is well above the local authority and national figures.
- In addition, there were 101 grade 9s across all subjects (6% of all grades). The school recorded the highest EBacc attainment scores (APS) in the local authority area.
- English GCSE results were above national results for those pupils achieving the highest grades 6-9.
- Progress 8 scores for pupils with low prior attainment have increased from 2018.
- There is an excellent ethos at the school. Leaders, teachers and staff ensure that pupils enjoy all aspects of school life. Pupils are well motivated and persevere in lessons. They make a tangible contribution to school life.
- There is a strong rapport between teachers and learners. Leaders model positive behaviour and standards. Pupils behave well in lessons and are considerate around the school.
- Most pupils go on to higher education, apprenticeships and employment, reflecting the high aspirations running throughout the school.
- Leaders make every effort to ensure vulnerable students attend school. Overall attendance exceeds 95% for most pupils. The rate of persistently absent pupils is falling and does not exceed 12.5%.

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

...excellent teaching strategies were shared more consistently throughout the school. For example, some teachers could use a wider range of questioning strategies to check and develop students' understanding.

‘Leaders, teachers and staff ensure that pupils enjoy all aspects of school life’




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

- School leaders prioritise the aspirations and achievement of disadvantaged pupils. They are aware of the growing numbers of disadvantaged pupils, and plan intelligently to provide for them.
- All teachers are given the achievement of disadvantaged and SEND pupils as a performance appraisal objective, helping them focus on their achievement. Departmental reviews include a focus on strategies to improve these pupils' performance.
- Teachers use a "teacher's toolkit" of teaching and intervention strategies. This puts provision at the centre of teachers' thinking.
- The school has been part of the Challenge the Gap project in the past two years. This has improved numeracy for disadvantaged pupils, with pupils reflecting on how they learn best. These are led by "teacher champions", increasing engagement in lessons.
- School leaders have made good use of the local SEND project. An additional HLTA has been deployed to increase inclusion, and the school draws on expertise from a London based external advisor.
- Historic progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils has improved in core GCSE subjects from 2018 to 2019. 25% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a strong pass in GCSE English in 2019 (18% in 2018). In 2019, Attainment 8 scores improved for disadvantaged pupils.
- The gap between the school's disadvantaged pupils and national non- disadvantaged pupils (English and Maths strong pass) was narrower than the same gap nationally in 2019.
- 25% of all pupils with SEND were entered for all elements of the EBacc, compared to 12% for pupils with SEND nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND demonstrate self-motivation and commitment in lessons. They are happy and keen to learn, and rightly proud of their school community.

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

...teachers continued to develop consistent use of effective strategies, and differentiation, for example, consistently using and applying the five-step plan and teacher's toolkit for SEND pupils.



‘Leaders and teachers go the extra mile to ensure that students have opportunities to access a wide range of rich and varied enrichment opportunities.’



Our mission is to reduce educational inequality and improve the life chances of all children. Through collaboration, challenge and professional development, we are working to ensure every school community can benefit from the combined wisdom of the education system.

To work towards our mission, we have collectively adopted these four core aims that guide what we do:

1. Improve pupils' examination results at a rate above the national average and accelerate progress of the disadvantaged
2. Enable all our schools to improve at a rate above the national average
3. Create more national leaders and outstanding schools that fulfil the Teaching Schools criteria
4. Develop a world class, self-improving and sustainable system that contributes to national research and policy-making

Challenge Partners welcomes schools that share our values, which underpin everything we do:

- **Excellence**
We are always looking for ways to improve because we are determined to achieve the best for every child, teacher and leader
- **Equity**
We treat each other fairly, with trust, care and respect. We seek the best for every child, and know that those who have the least need our combined expertise the most
- **Courageous Leadership**
We speak up and take responsibility for all children, making sure that we do not harm others in doing our best for our own schools
- **Challenge**
We expect the best of ourselves and each other, and value challenge which helps us improve
- **Collaboration**
We listen to, share with and learn from each other, developing our practice together so that every child benefits from our combined wisdom and creativity
- **Innovation**
We use and generate research, we innovate with discipline and evaluate intelligently in pursuit of better outcomes for all children, especially the most disadvantaged.



‘The majority of 2019 students took up the EBacc offer. This is well above the local authority and national figures.

In addition, there were 101 grade 9s across all subjects (6% of all grades)’

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 Effective

Quality of provision and outcomes Effective

AND

**Quality of provision and
outcomes for disadvantaged
pupils and pupils with additional
needs**

Area of Excellence (if applicable) None submitted for this review

**Previously accredited valid Areas
of Excellence (if applicable)** Not applicable

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate Effective

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed peer evaluation estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

More information about Challenge Partners can be accessed via
<https://www.challengepartners.org>



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