



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR THE CHILDREN'S TRUST SCHOOL

<b>Name of School:</b>	The Children's Trust School
<b>Headteacher/Principal:</b>	Samantha Newton
<b>Hub:</b>	London Special and AP Hub
<b>School phase:</b>	2-19 years
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	N/A

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Leading
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	21/03/2022
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review</b>	N/A
<b>Date of last QA Review</b>	N/A
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	24/05/2017



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR THE CHILDREN'S TRUST SCHOOL

#### 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** Leading

**Quality of provision and outcomes** Leading

**AND**

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

**Area of excellence** Accredited

**Previously accredited valid areas  
of excellence** None

**Overall peer evaluation estimate** Leading

***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 Children's Trust School is an incredibly specialist provision for 40 pupils aged from 2 to 19 years. More than half of the pupils have residential places. Many of these are for 52 weeks a year. Across the site there are more than 600 members of staff, including nursing teams, consultants and 24-hour care staff. Approximately 80 staff work at the school along with over 20 therapists.

The school is situated around a manor house of more than 24 acres with over 20 separate buildings and extensive gardens.

The school is a non-maintained special school. It is run on a not-for-profit basis by The Children's Trust. While not solely exclusive, the charity provides support at the school and nationally for children with acquired brain injury and neuro-disability. Pupils at the school come from over 20 local authorities (LA) across the south-east of England. The majority of places are funded by Surrey LA.

All of the pupils at the school have complex and multiple barriers to their learning. When pupils come to the school they join one of four learning pathways; Pre-intentional; Intentional; Formal and Concrete.

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

- Leaders at The Children's Trust School are incredibly committed to providing a level of education and care that is unparalleled. Visitors are overwhelmed when coming to the school to find an incredible provision that answers the question all parents and carers would ask, 'but would it be good enough if it was for my child?' For example, at the end of a long school day, residential pupils were seen to be seamlessly supported into taking part in a garden party in the Spring sunshine of the manor house gardens. Staff supported them to enjoy the sensations of being out in gardens with Europop playing. Emotionally aware staff supported the party atmosphere as pupils took part in this celebration at the end of an intensive day from their specialist wheelchairs and Acheever Beds.
- Leaders at the school are aware that in times past, the care aspect of each pupil's daily life has been delivered at the cost of carefully thought out pedagogy for learning. Leaders have a restlessness to refine and specialise the curricula offer each year to achieve more with the pupils in their time at the school.
- Staff turnover is very low. Many staff find the opportunity to work at The Children's Trust School a lifetime vocation, supporting the most vulnerable people in society. Staff talk about the opportunities they have for continuing professional development (CPD) and value the opportunities that are available for career

progression. Included this year are an Early Careers Teacher (ECT) and two members of support staff starting teacher training pathways.

- Leaders recognised that the educational governing committee needed more specialist education members. This means governors are more able to accurately understand the educational work of the school. Following COVID-19, governor visits are taking place again on-site. Leaders use these to reflect on other school improvement partners' reviews and ensure that governors are more able to articulate the work of the school across the range of its curricula.
- From its inception the school has grown. There are plans in action to further expand the school again. The leadership of the school has been extended to ensure it takes this planned growth into account, including increasing training available to new staff as new pupils with ever more complex and multiple barriers to their learning join the school.
- Leaders have developed an integrated therapeutic team of more than 20 therapists. Each class has an aim of three hours of therapeutic support each week. Over the lockdowns therapists started 'trans-disciplinary' working practice. This created a single point of access for parents and carers. Leaders are positive that this practice now needs to be taken forward as a way of improving the co-production of plans and support for the school's pupils and their families.

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

... leaders at all levels had security of knowledge of the education status and benefits of a non-maintained special school and could articulate this consistently.

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

- Leaders are excited and proud of the development of the school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This provision was not available at the school at the previous Ofsted inspection. Within the class children with complex and multiple barriers to learning are fully supported to have an active role in a classroom which looks very similar to a mainstream classroom. For example, children undertook a 'good morning' activity as a group with adults providing individual bespoke support for their needs. However, despite the children's complex and multiple needs, the classroom reflected mainstream EYFS practice with other activities (muddy play, mark making, animal toys, a sensory tent and a reading area) and an outdoor play area prepared and ready to be used.
- Detailed planning supports pupils in their classes. Each class has a display that explains the best ways to support and communicate with each pupil. It also covers how pupils will express their wants, likes and needs. Long term plans link to short term and weekly plans. All pupils have clear links to targets they cover each week

### REVIEW REPORT FOR THE CHILDREN'S TRUST SCHOOL

as part of their therapeutic curriculum. These can include for example, hoisting, intensive interaction, sensory stories, touch and sound clues, personal care, hydrotherapy, and Tac Pac.

- Leaders are confident from their monitoring of the strength of the school's quality of provision and outcomes. Pupils and their families have a clear role in preparing for their futures beyond The Children's Trust School. Leaders are recording in increasing detail the quality of the provisions the pupils move onto. Leaders track how pupils progress to inform the advice and guidance they provide to pupils and their families from Year 9 forwards in annual reviews.
- The school has adopted a 'total communication approach'. Within classes there is a range of layered communication on show and these can include Makaton, on body signing, augmentative and alternative communication methods (AAC), switches, Widgit symbols, objects of reference and sensory and musical cues. This layering of communication gives the pupils every chance to understand what is coming up and prepare them to learn in each activity.
- Staff at the school have mental health support that links to the challenges and emotional issues they may face within this specialist environment. Under this hybrid model staff have both education and safeguarding supervision to support their mental health and well-being.
- At The Children's Trust School leaders have developed an 'Adult Engagement' system that recognises and celebrates when strong teaching practice supports pupils' engagement and learning. This has been adapted from and developed with the school improvement partner sharing practice from an outstanding PMLD school. The process can also be used to clarify and support teaching colleagues to improve pedagogy within each class.
- The Children's Trust School are developing a 'Waking Day' model to support pupils and their specific needs. This is specified to support the pupils to make the most of their lives at the school through an integrated approach between different settings. For example, some pupils have connected learning within their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets continuing across the other provisions of the school including residential and the care home. To achieve this, best practice models are currently being researched.
- The school has a large staff. The mass majority of these are employed by the school to support education and therapy; however, there are more than 20 personnel that are employed as care support assistants to provide one-to-one care for the pupils' health across the school day. Leaders have targeted this as an area to improve so that these colleagues are also able to take a fuller role in the pupils' learning.

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

... leaders were fully reassured that there is a consistency of approach across the whole of the pupils' experience on the trust site and that 'every opportunity is a learning opportunity'.

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

- As a special school the curricula offered are bespoke and leaders have taken great care with curricular design to ensure that it matches the pupils' complex and multiple needs.
- The curricula and trans-therapeutic offer at the school ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Transition working starts as part of the EHCP from Year 9 and often includes searching for high quality post-19 provision on a 52 week residential basis.
- All pupils from Year 1 upwards have a 'Happiness and Well-Being Profile'. This identifies activities pupils like; how much they enjoy what they are doing; how the frequency of these activities can be increased and planning for activities that a pupil may enjoy but have not yet begun. This is a fairly new development for the school and evidence of impact is being developed.
- Pupils at The Children's Trust School had a strong offer for extra-curricular activities before COVID-19. Pupils were able to access more than 20 clubs across the school week. Although pupils are still currently in class bubbles participation is increasing again.
- Pupils at the school have Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) that links directly to the therapeutic needs of the cohort. For example, linking targets such as; tolerating sitting in a spinal jacket; engaging using EyeGaze technology; standing in a standing frame or a response to musical stimuli. This chosen methodology links therapeutic targets to pupils' progress and is discussed with families at Annual Reviews (AR).
- Multidisciplinary colleagues have a single set of notes that link to each pupil's care plan. The therapeutic input from these is split into universal, targeted and specialist actions. Universal actions are delivered by trained in-class colleagues under therapists' guidance. Small group interventions can be co-designed and co-run as targeted interventions. Specialist actions are delivered by specialist therapists as per Section F of an EHCP.
- Leaders understand that any staff joining the school will need to develop a highly specialised understanding of communicating in a meaningful way to support pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). All staff have access to specialist training at level two or three. While developed 'in house' it is nationally accredited. One colleague explained that the need to be trained in this at a later stage of her working life had given her ownership of her own teaching practice.
- At The Children's Trust School there is an understanding that staff need to develop deep, caring relationships that recognise and nurture the excitement and passion the pupils have for their learning. For example, using the postgraduate

skills of the music hub staff, pupils have taken an active role in creating music with their own supergroup 'CedarSuperSound'. Why not take this opportunity to follow this link and see the work of the pupils at The Children's Trust School, including their take on David Bowie's classic, Heroes?

<https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/brain-injury-information/latest/making-very-special-band-cedarsupersound>

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

... leaders had an increased pool of post-16 and post-19 residential education provision for pupils to move on to.

## **5. Area of Excellence**

Personal development opportunities that develop cultural capital for children with complex and multiple barriers.

### **Accredited**

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

Leaders consistently work to reduce the exceptional complex and multiple barriers to learning that each pupil has at the school. This is even more important for pupils who are in long term residential care. To achieve this, leaders have developed a programme of activities to develop the pupils' cultural capital and enhance their experiences.

This programme includes:

- The specialised work of the music hub with colleagues trained to a postgraduate level in Sounds of Intent (using resonance as a means of communication) under Professor Adam Okleford at Roehampton University.
- A nine-week enrichment programme for pupils at the school both as day pupils and residential pupils across the school holidays.
- More than 20 lunchtime and afterschool clubs.
- A commitment to the Artsmark Award going back to 2019.
- The development of 'sensory festival' in the summer called Reconnection - now sponsored by local businesses.

- Developing 'Yoga for a Special Child' for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties across the key stages.

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

Impact on pupils' outcomes is measured across a range of the school's assessment methodology. This includes:

- Progression recorded on the school's assessment programme, Earwig, including like-for-like video evidence of small step development.
- Taking an active part in a research project with The Specialist Yoga Group.
- The school's nomination and award of the Music Mark 2021.
- The school's internal data against the Sounds of Intent point scores, pupil by pupil, since 2017.
- The school's accreditation and commitment to the Artsmark from 2019.

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

Franz Allard, Teacher/Music Lead, [fallard@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:fallard@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)

Sarah Townsend, PETAL (Artsmark) Lead, [stownsend@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:stownsend@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)

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

For leaders at the school to have further opportunities to observe excellent pedagogy for pupils with complex and multiple barriers to their learning across a range of similar provisions.

For governors to use the linking opportunities provided through the Challenge Partners network to visit governing bodies of similar schools to ascertain how best to support leaders of The Children's Trust School maintain the highest education standards.

#### **Following the QA Review**





## **QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW**

### **REVIEW REPORT FOR THE CHILDREN'S TRUST SCHOOL**

**The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, the main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities and CP will collate and analyse report content to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector each year.**

**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 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.**