

Reading School
Evaluation Paper 2
Quality of Teaching and Assessment
January 2017

Our philosophy and aim is to deliver consistently high quality learning, so enabling every pupil to maximise their potential. This is our core purpose at Reading School, and we understand that the quality of teaching we offer is a significant contributor to achieving that purpose.

We are driven by a desire to ensure that:

- Reading School outperforms similar schools, both nationally and internationally in key academic areas/areas of expertise
- Reading School exhibits a culture where the continuous improvement of teaching and learning is an objective for every pupil and member of staff in the organisation
- Reading School aims to ensure that pupils achieve their potential regardless of their socio-economic background and cultural status
- Reading School ensures pupils are taught and inspired by staff who are well-qualified in the light of changing national and international standards, and who are among the best in their field
- Reading School offers a curriculum that is rich in breadth and depth.

We recognise and value the breadth and depth of high quality teaching which takes place regularly (every day), over time, at Reading School.

We constantly seek to ensure that staff are part of a supportive, challenging and collaborative culture in making every lesson at least good, and often outstanding. This paper represents Reading School's self-evaluation regarding Quality of Teaching as judged on 4th January 2017. This evaluation paper incorporates the quality of teaching, the progress of pupils in lessons and over time, teachers' subject knowledge, planning and assessment, the use of challenging tasks and the enthusiasm and engagement of pupils in lessons.

We consider our current key judgements to be as follows:

QT 1 Pupil progress in lessons and over time	1
QT 2 Teachers' subject knowledge	1
QT 3 Teachers' planning and assessment	2
QT 4 Use of challenging tasks	2
QT 5 Pupils' enthusiasm and engagement	1

The following documents or information has been utilised to inform this evaluation briefing paper:

Headmaster's Reports to Governing Body 2016

DSEF 2016-17

FFT Data December 2016

RAISE online 2016

Reading School Pupil Data January 2017

QT1 Improvement in effectiveness of teaching is crucial factor in ensuring pupil progress Outstanding 1

- a) Improvements in Teaching and Learning are a consequence of a greater emphasis on the role of Heads of Department. These trends will continue as a priority for 2017.
- b) Teachers in all areas are appropriately academically/professionally qualified in their chosen subjects and have been often observed to have outstanding subject knowledge.
- c) Rare instances of teaching that '*requires improvement*' or '*inadequate*' are addressed using support (support programme, peer observation) and challenge, including Capability procedures where considered appropriate. Teachers judged to be less than good are supported and challenged through a support programme and/or capability measures as appropriate.
- d) Promoting the further growth of at least *Good*, and in particular *Outstanding*, teaching remains a key focus of Reading School's leadership in 2017. We acknowledge that if the proportion of Outstanding teaching increases then there are improvements regarding the proportion of students gaining A*-A at GCSE and A*-B at A Level for instance.
- e) Much of the teaching in all Key Stages and most subjects is outstanding and rarely less than consistently good. Consequently the vast majority of pupils make rapid and sustained progress as demonstrated by the excellent Progress 8 scores in both 2015 and 2016. Teachers have high expectations and draw upon excellent subject knowledge. Pupils learn well across the curriculum and especially in Mathematics. Teachers often generate high levels of enthusiasm for and participation in learning. Teaching promotes resilience so that pupils are 'ready for learning.'
- f) However, there is scope for further improvement. We want a drive for continuous improvement to be evidence-based not based on the whim of politicians or self-appointed experts. This is implicit in the priorities set out in the Headmaster's presentation to staff in September 2016 but needs to be made more explicit. Teaching that requires improvement cannot lead to outstanding academic outcomes. Sustained good teaching over time can result in outstanding results over time. Thus perhaps the focus should be on consistently delivering at least good practice in teaching. This can only be achieved if Heads of department work in partnership with the senior leadership to sustain and enhance good practice. Also to seek out best practice, something encouraged by the planned Staff Day in January 2017.

QT2 Focus by teachers on the characteristics of outstanding teaching including specialist subject knowledge has assisted pupils to make above nationally expected progress over time. Outstanding 1

- a) Effective, improved CPD programme (2015-2016), TEACH/EAT sessions and has enhanced quality of teaching as evidenced by feedback and learning walks.
- b) Well-judged teaching strategies are used to engage pupils to challenge them to progress and that almost all are making rapid and sustained progress. Significantly, there is evidence of effective checking of pupil understanding and making appropriate intervention. Reading, writing, communication is addressed and marking is often of a good standard overall.

QT3 The use of assessment and feedback to enable Good or better learning is an on-going focus. Some areas of strength; however, there is also scope for whole school improvement. Good 2

- a) Improved use of questioning, self and peer assessment and marking is increasingly enabling pupils to demonstrate a good or better understanding of their learning across the curriculum.
- b) Improved preparation of pupils for written examinations in GCSE subjects. The ability of pupils to respond independently and accurately to examination standard questions is a key focus. The impact has been positive at GCSE in History, Geography and English Literature especially in 2016.
- c) It is important that 'progress over time' is demonstrated through marking and assessment.
- d) Data is increasingly utilised to differentiate within a framework of high expectations. Pupils with specific needs e.g. Pupil Premium, EAL are sustained progress. SEN pupils are making at least good progress according to FFT and RAISE online 2016 evidence, 4Matrix and 2016 Progress 8.

QT4 Effective use of challenging tasks in order to provide intellectual challenge Good 2

- a) Whilst at Reading School we do not expect teachers to teach in any specific way we do expect variety and intellectual challenge. In order to make rapid and sustained progress, Reading School pupils need work that is challenging. At Reading School outstanding lessons are characterised by a combination of challenge, engagement, questioning, independent learning, assessment and progress.
- b) Teachers have high expectations which are often reflected in planning and knowledge, skills and understanding is extended. The pace and depth of learning is a key feature of observed lessons. Evidence from lesson observations including peer observations, discussions with pupils and feedback from parents demonstrates that there is a positive impact on learning. However, there is scope for greater challenge and a greater level of consistent quality across all subjects in the curriculum.

QT5 Enthusiasm, Engagement and Commitment Outstanding 1

- a) Reading School pupils' engagement with and enthusiasm for learning is predominantly outstanding and this is illustrated by the high levels of commitment they display. Observation evidence demonstrates that the vast majority of Reading School pupils engage quickly and enthusiastically in their lessons.
- b) Overall, pupil attendance has risen over time to over 97%. (January 2017) The sustained improvement has enabled engagement in learning and arguably illustrates a greater commitment from our pupils to learning. Punctuality has also improved (January 2017 internal data)
- c) Further raising of aspirations including disadvantaged pupils to increase social mobility e.g. sit entrance test, attend Medical Schools, Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities is a key improvement priority for 2017 onwards. Feedback from partners and outside agencies who engage with Reading School pupils is often positive in its nature.
- d) Our engagement with Universities, local schools and International partners is promoting challenge, resilience and independence. Local partnerships through Future Stories programme and Reading First partnership, Reading University International partnerships e.g. Sure24 in Kenya (September 2016) and Hutchins School in Tasmania (November 2016) promote challenge and independence.
- e) The development of involvement in competitions such as the UK Maths Challenge and Olympiads in Languages, Chemistry and Biology promotes challenge and resilience.