



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR SKINNERS ACADEMY

<b>Name of Academy:</b>	Skidders Academy
<b>Headteacher/Principal:</b>	Shereka James
<b>Hub:</b>	Impact Alliance Hub
<b>Academy phase:</b>	Secondary
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	Skidders' Academies Trust

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	09/01/2024
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review</b>	This is the academy's first review.
<b>Date of last QA Review</b>	N/A
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	11/05/22



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR SKINNERS ACADEMY

#### Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host academy leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

<b>Leadership at all levels</b>	Leading
<b>Quality of provision and outcomes</b>	Effective

#### AND

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

<b>Area of excellence</b>	Not submitted at this review.
<b>Previously accredited valid areas of excellence</b>	N/A
<b>Overall peer evaluation estimate</b>	Effective

***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 academy**

Skidders Academy is a larger than average secondary academy in Hackney and is part of the Skidders' Academies Trust. The academy is housed in a state-of-the-art building and was opened in 2010. The academy is proud to be at the centre of its community. The learning environment is exciting, inspiring and motivating. The academy prides itself on being truly inclusive and bases everything around the Skidders' 6 (core values) – be curious, be cooperative, be determined, be kind, be respectful, be outstanding.

The academy has roughly the same numbers of girls and boys with girls outperforming boys. Approximately half of its students are from disadvantaged backgrounds and a similar percentage have English as an additional language. In 2015 the sixth form opened, and it is unashamedly aspirational for its students. Staff aim to ensure that when students leave they are a source of influence in their society, making sustainable and authentic contributions. The academy has a vast extra-curricular programme.

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

- The academy's vision is unapologetically ambitious for the students. It shows what is needed in the community and the role the academy wants to play driving forward change. Providing them with quality education is the first priority. The second is to be a positive source of influence in their society. There is a very strong, ambitious senior leadership team superbly led by the principal and her vice principals.
- Support from the Trust allows the academy to have autonomy with strategic decisions. This has enabled the senior leaders to identify and plan for areas of focus for their academy. Subject communities have started working across the Trust.
- Governors know the strength of the academy and areas for development. This is due to open and honest relationships between the governors and senior leaders. Link governors visit heads of department once per term and are proud to support the academy.
- There was no platform to build on when the principal arrived at the academy, so the culture had to change. Researched and evidence-based solutions were brought in. Strong systems have been developed in pastoral care and provision.
- The new systems for teaching, learning and assessment are developing well. The leaders have adapted their delivery with great success using teaching like a champion (TLAC) teaching methods and booklets for delivery.

- The academy has focused its continuing professional development for the last year on classroom delivery through TLAC and using booklets as the main resource in the classroom for students and teachers. Training for all has allowed summative assessments to identify student misconceptions and measure learning more rigorously over time, i.e. block tests mirroring the final assessment and always including previous units.
- The academy runs an aspiring middle leaders' programme for the Trust. The academy also leads teaching and learning across the Trust and is very outward looking.
- The academy is a vibrant place and yet there is a calm, quiet, purposeful atmosphere in every classroom. This was witnessed in all classrooms visited with a silent 'do now' starter setting the tone appropriately.
- There is a strong vision for development in the sixth form and there is evidence to support that it is succeeding. Year 12 has 3% better attendance than the whole academy and superb practice was seen in sixth form teaching with one reviewer seeing his 'best ever lesson' in Year 13 sociology. Nine out of ten students in the sixth form last year progressed to university.
- The personal development (PD) of all students is strong. Non-specialist staff are supported in delivery through the teacher version of the student booklet. This provides extra guidance, questions and examples to support the effective delivery of sensitive and controversial issues.
- The PD curriculum has enabled staff to better identify students with pastoral issues or views that need to be challenged and addressed. One such example was work done in response to homophobia which was picked up by teachers then challenged.
- Pupils are well supported in their next steps in education through effective and frequent careers education in all years. The academy has an ambitious personal, social and health education (PSHE) which focusses on British values encouraging students to become responsible, respectful and active citizens.

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

... the academy empowered middle leaders to drive forward the next phase of academy development.

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

- There has been a complete overhaul of the curriculum and its delivery. All senior leaders were involved including the SENDCo. The curriculum is ambitious and with the new systems in place the academy is expecting significantly improved outcomes.
- The new booklet system was trialled last year in a few subjects and all had improved outcomes. It was then further adopted by all subjects in one year group and is now in all subjects in all years.
- Alongside the new booklets the academy has introduced new three-week block tests. Gaps are identified with teachers then having to make sure the students catch up. This is done through a variety of methods including after academy interventions, cold calling, seating plans and re-teaching.
- Work on summative assessment has increased parental and student engagement with assessment, that is, work with the parent council to tweak the presentation of reports and increased numbers of students revising and creating revision resources.
- The new literacy policy is research-based, and the academy is convinced that it will have a significant impact. Staff have been trained in the use of tier two and tier three vocabulary as well as the 'control the game' whole class reading programme. Twice yearly testing will show the progress made by students.
- There is a vast extra-curricular programme with excellent take-up from students. One example is the young writers' group from which one of the students ended up reading her poems to the Queen at Clarence House.
- Students articulate their learning journey and where they are on it. There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere in all classrooms. This is aided at the start by a silent 'do now' starter.
- There is a vast programme of quality assurance which is very specific to the training that has been given. Senior leaders all contribute and have graphs to show their efforts from the previous weeks.
- Cold calling is commonplace and was particularly well evidenced in a Year 8 science lesson with excellent checking for understanding by the teacher.
- Subject knowledge is strong, as was witnessed in Year 10 English lessons where sociology and history were also introduced.
- The two areas for improvement from the last inspection are both now strengths of the academy. The new behaviour stages system was only used once in all the lessons visited. It was used with effectively and there was a

positive response from the student. In all the other lessons only merit points were given out.

- There is a standard way of teaching in the academy with booklets and visualisers. This was successfully witnessed in all classes. Learning is routinely checked and an early career teacher in English showed excellent practice when using this strategy and making the whole class turn back and re-read the identified page in the booklet. This was done by all and was reinforced through questioning from the teacher.
- The pace of lessons is appropriate. This was observed across the whole academy and shows the excellent training that has been undertaken by staff.
- Students look after their booklets, showing pride in their work, respect for their belongings and admiration for the academy. Students are accountable for their learning.

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

... there was increased opportunity for questioning that promotes higher order thinking.

... subjects ensured that the booklets are challenging for more able students and those with SEND.

... there was greater use of whole class response systems to check for understanding.

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

- There is a new leader for disadvantaged students who also leads on literacy and all the changes that she has made are through research-led strategies.
- The academy receives significant funding for disadvantaged students. The majority of this is now spent on CPD and recruitment with quality first teaching proven to be the best way to improve the outcomes for both disadvantaged students and those with SEND. The aim is to give every opportunity to every student.
- There is a clear system in place and all requests for funding must go through the senior leader. Financial support usually goes to the group for extra-curricular or trips so that those just missing out can benefit as well.
- Provision in the learning centre is bespoke for students who are at risk of suspension or exclusion, mainly due to their social emotional and mental

health (SEMH) needs. Impact can be seen through a range of measures that show success in areas such as attendance, merits and reintegration back to the main school. External agencies are engaged as needed for each student.

- The new booklets have allowed SEND students to be supported by teaching assistants and teachers.
- Excellent support was in art where the teacher modelled for specific students and individually checked for understanding, thus enabling all to thrive.
- Attendance is tracked for all SEND students and is in line with the whole academy attendance.
- The SEND department runs its own programme for least able readers which has testing at the start and end. Almost all pupils have great success and end up with their reading age equalling their chronological age.

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

... the academy used more data to check the success of its disadvantaged strategy.

... SEND pupil profiles were readily available and easily accessible to all staff

### **5. Area of Excellence**

Not submitted for this review

### **Following the QA Review**

The review report is primarily for the academy's internal use to support the academy'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.



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR SKINNERS ACADEMY

For further support following your QA Review, academies can access the Academy Support Directory; the Challenge Partners online tool that enables academies to connect with other academies in your hub and across the national network of academies.

Academies can also attend Sharing Leading Practice (SLP) events where academies showcase excellent and/or innovative practice. Sharing Leading Practice events allow academy leaders with specific improvement needs to visit a academy or attend an online webinar hosted by a academy, with outstanding provision in that area.

Both the Academy 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, academies 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>)