Name of School:	Churchill Academy & Sixth Form
Headteacher/Principal:	Chris Hildrew
Hub:	Lighthouse Hub
School phase:	Secondary
MAT (if applicable):	Lighthouse School Partnership

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	N/A
Date of this Review:	25/03/2024
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	N/A
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Requires Improvement
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	13/03/2023

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   N/A

Quality of provision and outcomes N/A

AND

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

Area of excellence   N/A

Previously accredited valid areas of excellence   N/A

Overall peer evaluation estimate N/A

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

Churchill Academy & Sixth Form is a comprehensive school based in a rural village in the local authority of North Somerset. There are 1594 pupils on roll including those within the sixth form. The school was opened in 1956.

Almost nine tenths of the pupil population are White British and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.

The percentage of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium grant funding is below the national average. The pupil base and school location deprivation indicators are also below average. Pupil stability is above average. The proportion of pupils with educational, health and care plans is below the national average, although that number has trebled in recent years.

The school had previously been a single academy trust and became part of the Lighthouse School Partnership in April 2023. There are 26 primary schools and four secondary schools within the trust.

The school's purpose is 'to inspire and enable young people to make a positive difference.' The values of the school are 'kindness, curiosity and determination'.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The reflective headteacher, supported by his committed senior leadership team, drives school improvement with a measured, insightful approach. Their self-evaluation is robust and candid. Thorough consideration means that priorities are accurately identified and precise planning is undertaken to support change management.
- The leadership team has been restructured to build additional capacity for the implementation of development plans. Roles have been created and responsibilities refined to support the enhancement of leadership for rigorous systems such as those related to welfare and attendance. The school has a well-defined approach to attendance including involvement from pastoral leaders at all levels. As a result of the consistent support and challenge, attendance at the school is above the national average.

- Leaders have overseen the introduction of a new behaviour policy. Clear communication, including through the 'classroom top 5' and the 'social time top 5', has allowed all stakeholders to have a better shared understanding of expectations. Staff, as a result of leaders' messaging and continuing professional development (CPD), know there is a collective responsibility for behaviour. Staff have developed a behaviour curriculum and a 'refocus room' has been introduced. The school now has established routines that support the calm and purposeful environment. Key Stage 3 pupils said about behaviour, 'Quite a big change … it's better now because it means you can do more learning and focus more … classes are quieter and more concentrated…'
- Leaders use metrics and other sources of information to analyse provision, including data related to achievement, attendance and behaviour. Trends and patterns are interrogated to enable proactive strategic decisions and to ensure leaders have a strong understanding of causation. Pupil voice is captured and any concerns are investigated in depth. Provision, such as tutor time, is responsive to emerging issues. Targeted pastoral interventions are facilitated. Referrals made related to behaviour systems, rewards and sanctions are monitored and quality assured. Leaders at all levels are involved in these processes which has led to a greater consistency in the application of the behaviour policy.
- The school has refined the CPD offer. 'How to' sessions allow teachers to focus on practical strategies that can be assimilated into their practice. CPD has included training related to reading strategies and reasonable adjustments. Staff enjoy working collaboratively. Teachers model to one another and are happy to share progress they have made in their own professional development on research activities. Colleagues have benefited from learning from each other to develop inclusive pedagogies such as approaches to meeting the needs of pupils with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- In some faculties, the use of 'assessment booklets' for assessment for learning is well embedded. The approach supports teachers in those departments to systematically check pupils' understanding and informs future teaching and learning.
- Leaders ensure that tolerance, difference and inclusivity are promoted through curriculum design across the school. Pupils' voice, related to their perceptions and experiences, is valued and used to inform CPD. The school has developed cultural celebrations to further recognise diversity, including neurodiversity and LGBTQ+.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if…

... leaders at all levels were further empowered to ensure that best practice in pedagogy, questioning, assessment and feedback was embedded consistently within all curriculum areas.

... clear and transparent systems were further enhanced to close the feedback loop where parents or students have raised concerns, in order to ensure that perceptions match the reality of the school's actions.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Across the school, the very positive relationships between staff and pupils create a safe, purposeful and welcoming culture. Teachers know pupils as individuals. They celebrate achievement and effort.
- The school has developed its tutoring and registration programmes, allowing for warm interactions to take place. Pupils prepare for the day ahead whilst undertaking a programme that includes reading, mental health and wellbeing, and personal, social and health education. One Year 9 pupil valued these sessions and said, 'They help me to get organised.'
- Teachers ensure that there are 'strong starts' to lessons. Pupils are provided with retrieval activities which prompt them to recall prior knowledge. In a Year 10 English lesson on an *Inspector Calls*, pupils were active from the beginning of the session when adding to descriptions of Mr Birling. At the start of a Year 9 French lesson, pupils were expected to independently use previously acquired language to record the time, date and weather as soon as they entered the room. They did so successfully and swiftly demonstrated positive learning behaviours. In a Year 7 drama session, pupils were immediately asked to ponder 'Are people born to be successful?', which resulted in thoughtful responses from the outset.
- Subject-specific vocabulary is prioritised by teachers and is developed well across all departments. In a Year 9 design technology session, involving the making of wooden hanging planters, pupils had a clear understanding of terminology. This supported them to create quality products. In a Year 12 geography lesson relating to elite migration, students readily used disciplinary language such as 'remittance' to demonstrate their understanding and make connections to prior learning. During a Year 12 session in music technology, students could confidently and accurately use technical language such as

'reversal' and 'reverberation'. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, pupils were able to explain their learning linked to vectors and rotational symmetry concisely.

- In some lessons, teachers use questioning to skilfully assess learning, identify misunderstanding and address misconceptions. For example, in a Year 9 geography lesson linked to taiga forests, the teacher's use of questions allowed them to gauge pupils' understanding and then provide clear explanations.

- Lessons across the curriculum benefit from well-considered resources. In a Year 10 physics session, the teacher's use of flashcards to model revision techniques to aid memory retention helped to foster a high level of engagement. Pupils could see value in these as a practical strategy. In a Year 13 psychology lesson, the provision of modelled examples helped students to work independently whilst applying their understanding of psychological theories.

- Pupils across the school have a range of opportunities to develop their leadership, facilitated through 'Impact Groups' which supports 'every student a leader'. There is an expectation for all Year 12 students to actively contribute, including in fund-raising and charity work. 'Impact Groups', such as one related to men's mental health, work with school leaders to develop provision. Pupil voice helped leaders to identify that sixth formers would benefit from support around financial capacity and this led to 'St James' Place' coming to the setting to provide information on fiscal management.

- The curriculum is continually reviewed to ensure that it is broad and challenging for all pupils. For example, *Jekyll and Hyde* is studied in Year 9 in English. The music curriculum has been redeveloped to have a strong focus in Key Stage 3 on providing pupils with a breadth and depth of opportunities that support onward study. In 2023, pupils at the school made better than national rates of progress at the end of Key Stage 4.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if…

… pupils were better able to articulate why they were proud of their achievements and how they have been successful in their learning.

… all pupils had greater active participation in learning.

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

- Vulnerable pupils are known as 'priority learners' to represent the intention for them to be placed foremost when creating the universal provision. Leaders take a strategic approach to planning for pupils' needs. 'Leadership Summits' include the sharing of successful provision and practice related to 'priority learners'.
- Pupils on the inclusion register are triaged so that the level of support provided is appropriate. 'Pupil passports', containing tailored teaching strategies, help to support some 'priority learners'. Provision maps give leaders and staff an overview to ensure that the support received by individuals is complementary. All interventions are monitored and reviewed. Provision is continually refined to ensure a positive impact.
- Leaders make sure that the take up of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities by 'priority learners' is tracked and monitored. Support is put in place to ensure access for individuals. Vulnerable pupils' participation is in line with their peers.
- All pupils on the special educational needs register have a key worker who leads reviews of plans, targets and provision. Pupils know they have someone to share their views with. This supports those with social, emotional and mental health needs to voice any problems. A group of 'priority learners' who were spoken to appreciate the levels of support provided to them and they felt they could ask for help.
- Leaders have forged partnerships with external agencies such as Elmtree alternative provision, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, 'Voyage Learning Campus' and North Somerset Autism Service. These connections support the sharing of expertise amongst the inclusion team. CPD has been facilitated for all staff around adaptive teaching and meeting the needs of 'priority learners'. Staff's increased knowledge and understanding have helped to ensure earlier identification and assessment of needs.
- Leaders have responded to the increasing social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils. The tiered offer includes tutors providing pastoral support, emotional literacy support assistants and social thinking groups. The school also utilises two counsellors. This range of assistance helps to reduce anxiety for vulnerable pupils.
- The school works extensively with vulnerable pupils who are persistently absent. An advisory teacher supports pupils whose attendance is between

70% and 85%. They build relationships with individuals and help them to re-engage with learning. The teacher also reflects with pupils and their families on the impact of their absence. An emotionally based school avoidance worker operates in partnership with the advisory teacher using similar methodology, which enhances capacity. There is a school-led tuition programme to help pupils to catch up. A member of staff undertakes home visits to work in partnership with families to enable pupils to attend school. As a result of this comprehensive support, the attendance of 'priority learners' is above the national average.

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

- … quality first teaching strategies identified in student passports were consistently applied in all areas of the curriculum.

- … there was a more comprehensive approach to supporting students with 'lost learning' to close gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

5. Area of Excellence

Not applicable

Following the QA Review

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

For further support following your QA Review, 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 (SLP) 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.(https://www.challengepartners.org/)

Finally, following the QA Review, schools 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)