



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR ST GILES SCHOOL

<b>Name of School:</b>	St Giles School
<b>Principal:</b>	Marianne Rodger-Weetman
<b>Hub:</b>	London Special
<b>School phase:</b>	All through
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	N/A

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	12/01/2026
<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>	18/04/2023



## 1. Context and character of the school

St Giles School is a Local Authority maintained special school in South Croydon, serving students aged 2-19 with complex physical disabilities, medical needs, speech and language difficulties and a range of primary need. Just under half of the pupils on roll have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), approximately two fifths severe learning difficulties (SLD) and under a tenth moderate learning difficulties (MLD). The majority of pupils have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Over half of the pupils' secondary need is a physical disability. The predominant ethnicities are White-British and Black-African and over a third of the pupils speak English as an Additional Language (EAL).

There are 114 pupils on roll of which 10 are in the post-16 class. Pupils are admitted from a wide catchment area which includes Croydon and the surrounding boroughs. The senior leadership team (SLT) are new to the school: the Headteacher is newly appointed and started in January 2026, with the Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher starting in September 2025.

The school's vision is 'Be the best you can be' and its values of 'respect, responsibility, participation, cooperation, choice, celebration and community' aim to promote a caring, happy working environment.

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

- The SLT are passionate and ambitious for the future, agreeing a clear vision of the main priorities which they wish to effect.
- Leaders use a range of strategies to quality assure teaching, ranging from pop ins, formal and peer observations to learning walks. The moderation process is developing and ensures professional dialogue about pupils' work across pathways and increases teachers' confidence regarding judgements before each assessment window.
- The digital platform 'Evidence for Learning' is effective in evidencing completion of programmes of study and particularly appropriate as evidence can be gathered through uploading photos, videos and observation notes towards EHCP targets and curriculum milestones.
- Continuous professional development (CPD) has focused on enhancing and developing teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogy, such as the use of objects of reference and total communication. Learning walks have been quality assured, and the assessment process revised, leading to consistency of practice.

- The climate for learning is strong. Visual displays celebrate pupil success and photographs of individual pupils outside each class reinforce a sense of belonging. Well established arrival routines in the morning ensure pupils are welcomed calmly by staff individually, ensuring a positive start to the day.
- The 'Irresistible Curriculum' creates WOW events throughout the year, many of which are annual. They promote community engagement and learning: for example, in the last 'Cool Café' local councillors attended, creating strong local links. Pupils raised £1000 profit which they will choose what they wish to buy for the school. Pupils from John Fisher School visited for a Christmas Concert with Saint Giles' pupils showing them how to sign a Shakin' Stevens song. Enterprise activities under the ASDAN Award develop independence, such as planning an afternoon tea party, making cupcakes and inviting parents to attend.
- Leaders have also ensured that Black Asian or ethnic minority representation is at the fore within the curriculum by reviewing and decolonising, thereby also reflecting the diverse community within the school.
- Inclusion is at the heart of all the school does. Leaders value pupil voice and promote self-advocacy through the school council who, if non-verbal, are able to voice their thoughts and ideas through the use of switches and Makaton. Pupils choose what extra-curricular clubs they would like on offer such as the sensory dance club and rebound therapy on a Thursday.
- Leaders are keen for the school to be outward looking and have joined the Specialist Learning Partnership Network, a collaborative network of special and mainstream schools, to share expertise, moderate assessment, develop curriculum approaches and improve outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

- ... agreed key points for change were strategically planned with stakeholder involvement.
- ... the curriculum was reviewed and streamlined such that its aims and end points were understood and accessible to all.
- ... further opportunities to develop and share best practice within and outside school were introduced.

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

- There are four pathways: Early Years Foundation; Pre- Formal; Semi-Formal; and Formal.

- Teachers are developing these, so that how they teach pupils in each pathway and the evidence base is more clearly defined. A termly class liaison meeting ensures appropriateness of the pathways through Educational Psychologist input and the transition annual review.
- Four curriculum pillars of access, communication, behaviour and ambition are themes that support the curriculum intent and run through the pathways, giving coherence and a continuous thread throughout.
- Attendance is an improving trend. Overall attendance is 84.4%. The Educational Welfare Officer works fortnightly with the school's Family Support Worker and SLT on bespoke improvement attendance plans. This work has resulted in an improvement from previous years. Many pupils have medical appointments to attend outside school, but this is well managed and reflected in the low unauthorised attendance figure.
- The provision for reading and phonics is strong and led by a communication lead and literacy lead. All pupils have story time and appropriate phonics input daily. Whole staff training has focused on Intensive Interaction, Tassles and objects of reference. In addition Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Champions have been trained and these developments have resulted in greater consistency and capacity to target class need.
- Relationships between staff and staff and staff and pupils are respectful, warm and purposeful. Actions and decisions are child centred, building advocacy, ensuring each pupil's dignity is at the fore. A shared energy underpins the climate for learning where all staff roles work closely together to create an optimal learning environment.
- Behaviour as communication has been a change in the school's culture. There are clear systems and procedures in place to support pupils and staff beginning with Zones of Regulation. Learning Walks evidence pupils being able to use the strategy effectively. If there are behaviour concerns, an Action, Behaviour, Consequence (ABC) chart is completed and informal strategies put in place. If there is no progress, a Regulation plan follows. The process is closely monitored and tracked.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and internal and external CPD ensures staff keep up to date.
- Resources are carefully matched to both class and individual need. In an Early Years mathematics lesson, pupils, with one-to-one support were able to choose, through the use of questioning, switch and large dice enabling all to participate, with adult support when unable to hold or throw.
- In a semi-formal literacy lesson the teacher skilfully used the story book and visual aids to recall content of London landmarks and terminology in relation to the theme, such as 'tall' and 'big'. Learning was then developed further by the four teaching assistants effectively facilitating meaningful engagement, such as reinforcing learning by using visual aids.

- Transition provision, at all stages, is a strength of the school. A clear timeline from Nursery to Reception is carefully planned and positive relationships, initiated by the Family Support Workers' knowledge, ensure positive relationships are at the heart of the process. Transition at St Giles has been highlighted by author Nicola S Morgan in her book 'Engaging Families in Schools' as best practice. Most pupils go onto special needs sixth forms and colleges to follow Life Skills or Level 1 courses. Students with PMLD may stay at St Giles for three more years.

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

- ... students' individual learning intentions/ objectives were made explicit at the start and throughout each lesson, enabling all adults in the classroom to support pupils to make progress.
- ... in class adult support for pupils was regularly reviewed such that an adaptive approach allowed for challenge to be added to increase pupils' independence.
- ... quality assurance outcomes were aligned more closely to planned CPD.

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

- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) manages approximately 114 annual reviews a year which averages four a week. A very high percentage of the annual review meetings have a parent or carer present. New outcomes are set at the end of each key stage. Currently teachers send evidence of progress via a PowerPoint. Parents report that they are kept well informed and this is a real achievement as the school liaises with 28 different caseworkers and a large number of different authorities. There are strong protocols for communication for example, weekly class liaison meetings between the SENDCo and headteacher inform and update on issues.
- The strategy for disadvantaged pupils is clear and effective; across most subjects, progress and outcomes for the disadvantaged pupils is in line with non-disadvantaged. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils matches that of non-disadvantaged students .
- Medically complex children struggle the most to engage and the school counteracts this through the close relationships that they establish and prioritising 'readiness for learning in the moment' with the pathways model tuned to learning preferences and needs. The high ratio of one-to-one support ensures needs are met. Daily feedback goes home to parents in the red books.

- Translators also ensure inclusion and equality for those pupils who speak EAL within the curriculum and for annual reviews. Dual language books are used, and learning explores different cultures through music and poems. In International Week, parents share stories or recipes from their own culture.
- Unit awards recognise achievement. In 2024-25 31 pupils attained these.
- There is a large multidisciplinary team who, throughout the day seamlessly deliver over 220 interventions. These include the use of the hydrotherapy pool, NHS therapies, Occupational Therapy, speech and language, physiotherapy and the Tulip nursing team who are based on site. In a semi-formal music lesson, a pupil was fed through a stomach tube by the nurses as the lesson proceeded.
- Specialist teachers in music, physical education and swimming are skilful in meeting pupils' needs. In a semi-formal music lesson, switches were used for communication and pupils were highly engaged tapping on the table. The teacher circulated, ensuring all pupils experienced feeling the strings on the guitar. Pupils have fortnightly swimming sessions. A one-to-one lesson with a post-16 pupil showed how the moving and handling plan supported the pupil being hoisted into the pool, and when the adult sang 'The wheels on the bus', the pupil smiled and moved his hands. The teacher observing said that she had never seen the pupil so relaxed or holding his head up before. In physical education, pupils develop motor skills by playing boccia using upper body movement.

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

... leaders further developed the quality assurance of SEND provision.

... the school's total communication approach was further strengthened, so that inclusive communication for all pupils was consistent across the school.

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

N/A

**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 content reports from across the partnership of schools and trusts including using AI tools to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector (sharing these with the partnership) each year. The QA Review reports remain confidential to Challenge Partners and the host school. This ensures that schools embrace the review as a development process, acting as a catalyst for their ongoing improvement. This is the primary purpose of the QA review. However, our aim is that the thematic analysis will demonstrate the additional value of a sector wide overview, illustrated with real-life examples.

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 partnership of schools. The School Support Directory 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>).