

Excellence in Pupil Development Award

Verification Report

School name:	Waverley School
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Award verifier:	Grace Kew
Award adviser (if applicable):	grace.kew@optimus-education.com
Date of verification:	13 July 2026

Commentary on the evidence provided:

- At all levels, there is a commitment to strengthening the school's provision to support pupils' personal development. Plans are very much part of the school improvement process.
- The action plan is based on robust self-evaluation, and is supported by findings from a firm evidence base. Leaders within the school are very reflective, and any areas identified as requiring development are addressed comprehensively.
- The school's work is clearly underpinned and supported by a wide range of policies.
- Personal Development, and how the EPDA award complements this, is promoted across all year groups. An extensive range of well-planned enrichment activities is fully integrated into the curriculum and wider offer, including, for example, visits to local places of worship, trips to the zoo, museums and farms, a visit to the National Space Centre and a residential trip to Barcelona.
- As a result of coherent planning, real and relevant links are made to life skills and opportunities beyond the school gates.
- The school is highly proactive in meeting the needs of its community, inviting a range of visitors from different faiths and agencies to speak to pupils on relevant issues, including a local Police officer who led an assembly on the impact of drugs on the brain.

- A range of evidence was provided, including feedback from surveys, which evidenced the impact of this aspect of the school's provision.
- The school's work is clearly underpinned and supported by a wide range of policies.
- Staff are provided with a broad spectrum of professional development opportunities, which helps them to develop the necessary skills to implement the curriculum.
- The school has well-developed systems to celebrate behaviour. As they progress through the school, pupils are supported and encouraged to develop their intrinsic motivation to achieve.

Strengths identified during verification:

Leadership and Management

- The drive of leaders is underpinned by a clear moral purpose, which is reflected at all levels. The school is very determined to ensure all pupils have a chance to thrive when they move onto the next phase of education.
- Leaders have a clear, strategic vision for how this award will support ongoing school improvement, including pupils' personal development, as set out explicitly in Objective 8.1.
- Effective leadership has ensured there is a clear distribution of tasks across a wide range of departments. Because of this, staff feel fully involved in developments towards the award.
- Professional development is a real strength, and leaders ensure staff's skills are aligned to the ambitious curriculum which has been developed.

Staff

- Staff provide rich opportunities for all pupils to thrive through the curriculum and wider enrichment activities, and the additional, bespoke support offered where needed ensures the school's provision is genuinely inclusive, including for pupils with additional needs.
- Recognising and celebrating pupils' successes across the school life and the wider curriculum is highly valued by staff. The e-Praise system and Good to be Green are rooted in the school's values and strengthen pupils' motivation and behaviour.
- Staff fully contribute to the wider life of the school. They are committed to developing the skills of pupils, preparing them for the next phase in their education. As a result of effective curriculum design, real and relevant links are made to life skills.
- Staff recognise the importance of strong working relationships with parents so that home and school work together to support pupils' personal development, for example, through regular communications, reading records, parent workshops and direct contact with staff and senior leaders.

Parents

- Parents have been informed about the EPDA and how associated developments have led to the school achieving the award.
- Parents were really appreciative of the staff who support their children in a sensitive and caring way. This approach is very much the embodiment of the school's overarching values.
- The work of the school to support pupils' personal development was consistently highlighted by parents as a key strength, particularly in relation to communication, enrichment visits and supportive workshops that build confidence and improve behaviour.
- They described the school as strongly supporting their children's personal development and wellbeing, particularly through access to speech therapy, one-to-one support and confidence-building workshops for pupils and parents.

Pupils

- Pupils feel encouraged to make positive choices about behaviour, attendance and learning, and they value rewards such as star of the term, E-praise, “Good to be Green”, attendance prizes, discos and special celebrations including Eid parties and a “royal tea party” for top E-praise earners.
- Pupils say staff know how to support them when they are worried or vulnerable, noticing when they look tired or sad, offering calm spaces and access to the nurse, involving safeguarding staff where needed, and using PSHE and counselling to help resolve friendship problems and respond to bullying.
- Pupils feel that community and faith-related opportunities help them develop responsibility, respect and confidence, mentioning learning about Eid and Diwali, visits to temples and mosques, and assemblies that help them understand practices such as fasting, so they can be more respectful outside school.
- Pupils speak very positively about how the school supports their personal development, describing increased confidence and resilience through experiences such as the Barcelona trip, leadership opportunities and targeted support when they are worried or vulnerable.

Impact:

- The EPDA coordinator has been highly effective in his role, and the portfolio clearly evidences his hard work and the commitment of staff across the school in working towards the award.
- Through the award, the school has developed a wide range of external and community links, and, as a result, pupils’ experiences and opportunities for personal development have been significantly enriched.
- The EPDA framework has been used purposefully as a diagnostic tool, enabling leaders to reflect on and refine existing practices in relation to pupils’ personal development.
- Working towards the award has provided a valuable structure for leaders to review an already rich provision, identify strengths and plan further enhancements.
- Leaders have focused sharply on supporting pupils to develop character traits and dispositions that underpin effective learning, such as resilience, responsibility and confidence, and this is now evident in pupils’ attitudes and engagement.
- There is a consistency in terms of the pedagogical approaches, which is constantly reviewed for impact and developed over time.
- There is a clear consistency in how the school’s values and expectations for personal development are promoted across year groups, subjects and enrichment activities, so pupils receive a coherent, joined-up experience.

Areas for development:

- To continue to refine strategies so that all pupils, including those with additional needs, benefit fully from the school’s wide range of enrichment opportunities.
- To ensure that the curriculum expectations within the resource-based centre are clearly aligned with those of the rest of the school, while maintaining appropriate, personalised support.



- To continue to gather and act upon pupils' views in order to further enrich and shape this aspect of the school's provision.

Verifier recommendation:

Waverley School to be awarded the EPDA for a period of three years.

Head teacher comments:

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