

<b>School:</b>	Thomas's Clapham
<b>School lead:</b>	Kiara Gray; Deputy Head, Learning and Teaching
<b>IAPS Consultant:</b>	Nicola Maher

## Project description:

With a recently appointed SENCo and a relatively new team in its Learning Enhancement (LE) department, expert guidance was needed to ensure the needs of pupils and their families were being effectively met. The school wished to celebrate its successes whilst also identifying critical areas for improvement through review by an external consultant.

## School comment from Kiara Gray:

Tim Wheeler helped connect us with Nicola Maher, a consultant well-suited to our needs. The consultation began with a series of online meetings, where we discussed our objectives and Nicola outlined her approach. She then visited the school to observe our team in action, engaging with a range of stakeholders, including pupils, to ensure her findings were well-rounded and aligned with our self-assessment.

Following her visit, Nicola provided a comprehensive report detailing her observations, highlighting areas of excellence, and offering constructive recommendations. These actionable next steps will now inform our strategic planning for the remainder of the year and beyond.

We were extremely pleased with the entire process and would highly recommend both Nicola and IAPS for their insightful and professional support.

## Consultant comment from Nicola Maher:

As a consultant, one of my core priorities is ensuring that the work I do leaves the school with a clear, practical sense of direction. A consultant brings a unique external perspective and is well-placed to gather, synthesise, and reflect the views of a wide range of stakeholders. This independent position allows for a balanced and objective overview, which often brings clarity and renewed focus to school development work.

A truly effective review depends on transparency, trust, and collaboration. From the outset, the purpose of the review must be clearly understood and supported by all involved. In this instance, the process was expertly facilitated by Thomas's Clapham, who ensured that I had full cooperation from the whole school team, including key stakeholders such as pupils. This enabled me to conduct a thorough and meaningful review, celebrating existing strengths as well as highlighting areas for ongoing improvement.

I was genuinely impressed by the professionalism of all involved as well as the enthusiasm to actively engage in the process. This collaborative spirit significantly enhanced the impact of the review. The outcome, I believe, not only provided reassurance to senior leaders but also shone a light on the excellent work already being undertaken by the Learning Enhancement team.

Working with the school in this way was both enjoyable and professionally rewarding. It reaffirmed for me the value that the review process can bring, offering clarity, fostering collaboration, and supporting long-term improvement from an informed and impartial standpoint.