

ARK Conway Primary Academy

60 Hemlock Road, Hammersmith, London, W12 0QT

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- All pupils make rapid progress and achieve highly, particularly in learning to read and write, and in their understanding and application of mathematics.
- High quality teaching inspires and motivates all pupils to try their very best.
- Teachers set high expectations for learning and behaviour and pupils respond extremely well so that their all-round achievement is outstanding.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those identified with special educational needs make accelerated progress because of the well-targeted support they receive.
- Pupils enjoy a wealth of high-quality learning experiences that include opportunities to excel in art and music.
- Well-trained teaching assistants work closely with class teachers to provide pupils with very effective personalised and small group support.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective and central to the school's core values.
- The headteacher provides strong and inspirational leadership. He enjoys the full confidence of staff, governors, parents and carers.
- School leaders are extremely well supported by ARK (Absolute Return for Kids) Schools.
- Parents hold the school in high regard. 'We felt like we'd won the lottery when our child gained a place here' was a comment typical of the enthusiasm encountered by the inspector.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out five extended lesson observations taught by two teachers. These were all jointly observed with the headteacher. The inspector also observed teachers providing intervention support for pupils and attended a whole-school assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair and a representative from the Governing Body, the Director of Primary Education for ARK Schools; teachers, teaching assistants and pupil representatives. The inspector also spoke informally with parents and carers.
- The inspector carried out a scrutiny of pupils' books, looking in detail at the content and quality of pupils' written work, the effectiveness of marking in promoting pupils' learning and displays of pupils' past work around the school.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents including plans for the school's expansion and improvement. External reports from ARK Schools, moderation reports, information on pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the headteacher's monitoring information, and behaviour records were also reviewed. During the inspection the inspector heard a selection of pupils read and looked at examples of their work in class.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside the classrooms, and the school's safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- By the end of the inspection there had been 43 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, and nine responses to a staff questionnaire. These were all taken into account.

Inspection team

David Edwards, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This primary school was opened as a new, free school academy in September 2011. It is part of a wider partnership of schools supported by ARK Schools. Currently there are two classes that provide education for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1.
- The school is due to grow year on year for the next five years until it reaches its capacity as an average size primary school catering for 210 pupils.
- Currently the majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services, is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus (those who require extra help with their learning) is below average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide regular opportunities for all staff to reflect on their practice and implement changes that will further improve and sustain outcomes for pupils.
- Share and promote best teaching practice and findings with other local schools within the ARK Schools network and more widely.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are expected for their age. They are very eager to learn and, due to the high-quality teaching and learning environment, make rapid progress in the key areas of social development, language and mathematics. As a result, pupils enter Year 1 having made a very good start in acquiring reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Pupils continue to make outstanding progress in Year 1. Pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are exceptionally high with the majority of pupils demonstrating at the end of Year 1 standards more typically expected to be seen at the end of Year 2.
- All staff are skilled in the teaching and delivery of phonics (letter sounds) to support pupils' reading development. Children in the Reception class learn to listen carefully to instructions and are able to speak confidently in sentences when questioned by an adult. With these very good speaking and listening skills children are turning into confident readers.
- Children make very good progress in developing their ability to write. They are encouraged to practise writing daily in formal writing sessions and when they are engaged in play-based activities. For example, the inspector observed a lesson where children were very well supported to write a story about pirates. They all showed a confident understanding of phonics which they used to help them write in sentences. High quality teaching and support ensure children complete their time in the Reception class with very secure writing skills.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is a real strength. The school teaches a curriculum that puts particular emphasis on visual modelling to support pupils in mastering the basic knowledge and skills in mathematics. For example, in a highly successful Year 1 mathematics lesson pupils demonstrated a confident use of practical mathematics apparatus to help them first visualise and then understand place value before successfully subtracting a single digit from a two-digit number. Pupils who found this activity challenging were identified by the teacher and given additional support later in the day. This shows why all pupils make outstanding progress.
- For disabled pupils and those with special educational needs the impact of well-planned actions and personalised support means they make accelerated progress and their achievement is often in line with that of their peers. The school is successful in closing any gaps identified in pupils' learning. The highly effective support given to all pupils is also an example of the school's successful promotion of equal opportunities.
- By the end of Year 1 pupils' writing skills are very well established. Pupils have regular opportunities to write for many different reasons and a range of audiences. Their writing is clear and often imaginative. For example, in an English lesson, having received a letter from 'the Government' stating why children should not be allowed to visit the seaside, pupils were encouraged to think about reasons why they should be allowed to go to the beach. They were carefully helped by their teacher to craft imaginative and accurate sentences before writing them convincingly in letters of response. One pupil wrote: 'I am writing to you because we must go to the seaside! It is incredibly fun and we can play amazing water games.'

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and make very good use of information about pupils' attainment. They plan carefully to make sure the work they set in lessons provides the right level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Support for less confident pupils and stretch for the more able mean that pupils make very good progress and achieve very well.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding. They adjust their teaching to make sure that all pupils are confident with the new learning before they start to work on their own. For example, in the Reception writing session the teacher reminded children of the

previous work they had done and provided regular opportunities for children to talk with a partner in order to develop their thinking.

- Pupils maintain very good concentration because class management is excellent. Teachers use modern technologies, such as interactive whiteboards, expertly to engage pupils in learning and constantly share with them what they are expected to learn in each lesson.
- The teaching makes sure that all pupils are fully involved. For example, in the Year 1 class the teacher used rhymes and chants to rehearse the days of the week, months of the year, days attended at school this year, the weather, time and money facts. Pupils performed this routine with great enthusiasm. Each fact rehearsed was used by the teacher to reinforce and check pupils' growing knowledge. This strategy is very successful in building pupils' self-confidence.
- Pupils receive clear guidance as to how to improve their work. They are provided with regular opportunities in lessons to complete open-ended tasks on their own or in small groups. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to think about their learning and to assess for themselves how well they have done. All adults are very quick to notice if a pupil gets stuck at any point.
- Marking and verbal feedback are well established throughout the school. Pupils who spoke with the inspector were able to explain confidently how their teachers' marking was helping them to improve their work. Pupils have regular opportunities to exercise their developing skills and apply their knowledge through working independently, and in small groups.
- Classrooms are carefully organised and managed and every part of the small outdoor area is utilised to stimulate learning. The displays of current work in classes and around the school are attractive and celebrate pupils' achievements.
- Teachers' commitment to, and detailed knowledge of, individual pupils mean that lessons are carefully planned to engage and inspire.
- Adults work very effectively together to provide for the learning needs of pupils and provide daily one-to-one support to those who have not made the expected progress earlier in the day. This rapid response to pupils' learning needs ensures pupils are given a further opportunity to practise and secure their literacy or numeracy skills. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress and any gaps in their attainment are quickly identified and addressed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils display excellent attitudes to learning in lessons. Around the school pupils are polite and well mannered. The respect they show for adults and each other, and their understanding of how they are expected to behave, are strong features.
- The school's core values of aspiration, respect, perseverance, honesty and happiness are woven through the taught curriculum and promoted by all adults. For example, in a whole-school assembly pupils were given time to reflect on how they might demonstrate the core values and share their ideas with one another before listening to a story that promoted perseverance.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and school records confirm that pupils' behaviour is of a consistently high standard. The curriculum has been designed to be inclusive and supports the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The school has sought out and developed a network of relationships with outside agencies and partners in order to help pupils and their families who sometimes require additional support. The school has successfully introduced a 'behaviour for learning plan' that is understood and adhered to by all staff. It is successful in promoting a calm and positive learning environment and ensures that pupils who require this additional support make very good progress in school.
- Parents and carers who responded to the on-line survey, Parent View, strongly agree that their children are safe and well looked after. Those who spoke to the inspector agreed that their children are safe in school and well looked after. One pupil who spoke with the inspector said, 'I

would recommend this school because you will learn lots of things and make new friends.’

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership and management within the school are successfully promoting high achievement, exceptional teaching and outstanding behaviour and safety for all pupils. This is based on high expectations, quality teaching, knowing every child, and providing depth of knowledge in literacy and numeracy skills.
- The school benefits from being part of the ARK Schools network and has readily drawn on the knowledge and expertise provided through the network.
- The headteacher embodies a strong moral purpose characterised by high expectations and high achievement for all staff and pupils alike. He ensures self-evaluation is honest and accurate and this provides the rationale for the on-going professional development of all staff. For example, time was given to staff to reflect on how teaching assistants are deployed within classes. This led to the filming of lessons so that staff could review their teaching and where appropriate adapt or change their practice. Leaders recognise that there is potential to build further on this excellent work.
- The work of the school is regularly and thoroughly checked externally by ARK Schools. As a result, governors have an accurate overview of the school’s strengths, the progress of pupils and areas requiring further development or improvement. Senior leaders are committed to promoting the strengths in teaching practice and findings with other schools within the ARK Schools network and beyond.
- Staff performance is effectively managed by leaders and the governing body. Staff have begun to see the benefit of reflecting on their work in order to make further improvements. They have begun to take advantage of the training opportunities made available to them by senior leaders.
- The carefully tailored support for pupils’ individual learning needs means the school is promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination effectively, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupil premium funding has been carefully planned for and allocated to support those pupils entitled to additional help.
- The curriculum provides many excellent opportunities for the development of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding. The range of subjects and topics taught is extensive and careful thought goes into how pupils’ skills are developed.
- Despite the school’s urban location regular opportunities to experience ‘Forest School’ are made available to pupils. Examples of the breadth of opportunity have recently included visits to a local theatre, the Museum of Childhood, Tate Britain and the seaside.
- Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory requirements. The school’s leaders identify and swiftly respond to any concerns regarding child welfare. The strong parent community underpins the school’s commitment to high standards.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body are able to draw upon a strong set of skills and some also offer recent educational experience. Rigorous and extensive checking of all aspects of the school’s work by senior leaders promotes a culture of searching analysis and self-challenge. This enables the governing body to closely monitor the work of the school, including the quality of teaching, and enables them to exercise appropriate challenge as well as support. This was shown during negotiations to expand the headteacher’s executive leadership role with another local partnership school.

- The regular information provided by the headteacher and senior leaders to the governing body is detailed and comprehensive. It allows governors to compare pupils' outcomes to schools locally and nationally which gives them a clear overview and understanding of pupils' attainment and progress. For example, the pupil premium funding is being used wisely to make sure these pupils get the right kind of support. Governors are up to date with recent requirements relating to the management of staff performance. They are ensuring that any staff promotion and salary is linked to the progress pupils make. The governing body has benefited from the expertise provided by ARK Schools and value the regular external monitoring reports they receive.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137331
Local authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	400338

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Toop
Headteacher	Damien McBeath
Telephone number	020 32491180
Email address	info@arkconwayprimary.org

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