

Canary Wharf College

197 East Ferry Road, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 3BA

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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.

- Pupils throughout the school learn exceptionally well and make rapid progress.
- Teaching is outstanding because lessons are very well planned with clear structures. Resources are very carefully designed to motivate pupils, and richly engaging learning experiences capture their interests.
- The success of the school is largely due to the leadership provided by the headteacher, which is very strong and reflects dedication and commitment. She has very effectively built a highly committed staff team.
- Senior leaders have successfully planned and formed a new school. Links with parents and carers are exceptionally strong and help the school to meet the needs of the pupils.
- The governing body shows a high level of commitment to the school, as demonstrated by its members' regular visits and the active support they provide.
- Robust systems for monitoring the performance of teachers ensure the developmental needs of staff are met. Staff say how much they value the support they receive and how their planned professional development and opportunities to review this help them address the school's priorities.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is promoted very well through a wide range of activities.
- Pupils' extremely good behaviour is a major contributory factor in the high standards they reach. Pupils concentrate really well during lessons, treat each other with respect and consideration, and enjoy excellent relationships with the staff.
- There is rich extra-curricular provision with high participation by pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or part-lessons. In addition, short sessions of phonics teaching were observed. All lessons were observed jointly with the principal.
- The inspector scrutinised the work in pupils' books as well as listening to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, senior managers, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor.
- The inspector took account of the 87 responses to the online Parent View survey and scrutinised 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, which included: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress and records of observations of the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's information about pupils' progress; and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Kekshan Salaria, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Canary Wharf College is a state-funded free primary school, which opened in September 2011.
- The school is much smaller than most schools in England. It is designed with an average of 20 pupils per class and currently has 120 pupils aged 4 to 8 years. It is planned to grow to capacity by 2017 with 280 pupils aged 4 to 11 years.
- The site is currently being redeveloped to provide the facilities that will be needed when the school is at capacity. The new accommodation will be opened in September 2014.
- Canary Wharf College has a non-denominational Christian ethos and is a designated school of religious character.
- The pupils come from a wide range of cultural heritages. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Some are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to free school meals, looked after children or children of service families, is well below the national average. There are currently no children of service families in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by ensuring that all lessons progress at an equally good pace, and pupils are encouraged to think critically about their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Typically, children join the school with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. They settle quickly and benefit from an extensive range of carefully planned, well-supported activities. They make very good progress, so that by the end of the Reception Year, a much higher proportion of children reach the expected learning goals.
- In the Reception classes, children are independent and curious. Early reading is developed well by highly structured and effective phonic programmes (the linking of letters and the sounds they make), and an emphasis on books and successful partnership work with parents and carers. Visits by authors and storytellers are used very effectively throughout the school to engage the pupils in reading. Particularly noteworthy is the way teachers constantly encourage pupils to widen their experiences of different authors and genres.
- Pupils from Year 1 and Year 3 who read to the inspector used their knowledge of letter sounds to demonstrate secure phonic knowledge when they encountered unfamiliar words. The most able pupils read with fluency, enjoyment and understanding.
- Pupils make good and often outstanding progress throughout Key Stage 1, so that they reach well above average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they reach the end of Year 2.
- The quality of the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books showed outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and rapid, sustained progress in Year 3.
- The learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very well supported. Their needs are identified clearly and they receive carefully tailored personalised support and guidance, for example through the use of additional adults in lessons. As a result, they make similar progress to other pupils.
- Pupils who are new to the school, including those who are at the early stages of learning English, are monitored very carefully and given highly effective support following a precise diagnosis of their needs. Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make just as rapid progress as their peers.
- The school sets challenging targets for pupils and has very high expectations of success. During the inspection, there was much evidence of the high standard of learning celebrated in the display of pupils' work, for example on 'Tudors' and the lifecycle of a butterfly which involved the creative use of information and communication technology techniques.
- Music taught by a visiting teacher developed pupils' understanding of rhythm, notation and performing as a group well.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The key strength in teaching is the highly effective collaboration of teachers and other adults in lessons. Staff know their pupils well and, as a result of carefully checking pupils' progress, they plan their lessons to ensure that work is at just the right level for everyone.
- In the Reception classes, there is a good focus upon developing children's language skills through drama and role play, especially those in the first stages of learning English as an additional language. The inspector observed children animated and excited by their observations of butterflies 'popping out' of cocoons. Children's learning is exceptionally well recorded and this information is used effectively to plan their next steps.
- Teachers have excellent, often humorous, relationships with the pupils in their classes, typically making very good use of resources, to create a positive, friendly classroom atmosphere. Lessons are varied and interesting. Activities are frequently presented to pupils in an imaginative way. For example, adults pretending to be the 'Gruffalo' appealed greatly to both boys and girls in Year 2 and resulted in some high-quality written work. An exciting development is the use of

tablet computers in the Reception classes.

- A distinctly strong feature of the school is the quality of the teaching assistants. They intervene and support pupils sensitively, and make a strong contribution to their learning across the school. This is especially the case when the teachers give teaching assistants detailed plans to help them ask their group of pupils the right questions and steer their learning successfully. For example, making sure that mathematical terms are used accurately.
- The teaching of phonics has a high profile. Much is confident and assured, with excellent practical resources that provide helpful visual prompts for pupils.
- In the best lessons, teachers ask probing questions to challenge pupils' thinking and encourage them to develop and explain their ideas. This skilful questioning is well established. As a result, errors or misconceptions are spotted and corrected quickly or used effectively to make useful teaching points.
- Teachers actively encourage pupils to answer questions using full sentences. This was particularly the case during a guided reading session when Year 1 pupils were responding orally to questions with confidence and clarity.
- The objective of each lesson and what pupils should learn is shared routinely, enabling pupils to be clear about precisely what they should be doing. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson staff were alert to any potential misunderstandings, helped pupils to explain their thinking and the methods they used by using precise mathematical vocabulary.
- Relatively weaker aspects of teaching include too much teacher talk, which constrains the rate at which lessons proceed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- On arrival in the morning, the headteacher greets every pupil; pupils clearly enjoy attending school, as shown by their eagerness to enter the building. Consequently, attendance is well above the national average.
- Well-established routines, consistently high expectations and highly effective class management techniques result in outstanding behaviour in lessons and around the school. This is reflected in the fact that there have been no exclusions. Movement around the building and the small play areas at morning break and lunchtimes is safe and sensible as a result of appropriate, sensitive interventions by adults.
- In the Reception classes, children are offered many opportunities for choosing and following independent, and in some instances, small group activities, which develops their self-confidence and interest in learning.
- The school takes all necessary steps to ensure that pupils are kept safe. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View felt their child was safe at the school. Pupils also say they feel safe at the school. They added that there is no bullying and felt confident the adults would deal effectively with any, should it occur.
- Pupils' well developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a key factor in their above average attendance and exemplary behaviour. Weekly reflection time, circle time and daily assemblies promote pupils' understanding, and is reflected in the quality of their interaction, respectfulness and tolerance of each other.
- Parents and carers praise the approach of teaching staff and additional adults alike; one commented, 'Communication with parents is a real strength. Parents can email teachers with any concerns and get a prompt response.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Against a backdrop of setting up systems for the new school, outstanding quality teaching has been established. This, combined with pupils' enthusiasm to do well, ensures that pupils make

rapid progress.

- The headteacher is wholly committed to doing the very best for the pupils, and all members of staff share her aspiration for pupils to enjoy their learning and to achieve their potential.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, defines appropriate priorities for improvement, and gives clear guidance on how to achieve them.
- Senior leaders undertake a wide range of activities to check on the school's provision, including looking at pupils' books and observing lessons frequently. However, the skills and involvement of pupils in critically assessing their learning are underdeveloped.
- Training and coaching are part of the school's systematic approach to developing the skills of all staff. Strong practice is shared and much thought has been given to the teaching partnerships in some year groups so that teachers' skills complement each other.
- Staff know that they will be held accountable for the progress that pupils make and that the quality of their work will be considered when making decisions about salary progression. They have targets linked to school improvement priorities and their performance is reviewed.
- The detailed curriculum is very well organised into sequential topics with good links across subjects which are culturally and ethnically diverse. The wide range of learning experiences provided includes role play and good use of information and communication technology.
- The school takes steps to promote equality of opportunity appropriately and discrimination of any sort is not tolerated by pupils or staff. This is reflected in the strong emphasis that senior leaders place on narrowing the achievement gap between vulnerable pupils and their peers.
- Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils meet government guidelines. There are good arrangements to safeguard pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school and the risk assessments that are routinely carried out.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors work very closely with the headteacher on the school's regular evaluation of its work. As a consequence, governors have an accurate view of current strengths and what remains to be tackled. They check carefully the management of the school's performance and ensure there are strong links to both classroom performance and the payment of salaries. They ensure that additional funding provided through the pupil premium is used to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The headteacher provides detailed reports about the quality of teaching and about pupils' achievements that enable governors to ask the right questions. Governors also visit the school regularly and are involved in developing action plans and in checking that policies and practice, including for safeguarding pupils' well-being, are kept thoroughly up to date.

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	137016
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	400330

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

Type of school	Academy free school
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Griffiths
Principal	Mrs Sarah Counter
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 7515 2328
Fax number	NA
Email address	principal@canarywharfcollege.co.uk

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