

# Southwark Free School

The Ledbury Community Hall, Pencraig Way, London, SE15 1SH

## Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is good in both year groups. All groups of pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are prepared well for the next stage in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, with some elements that are outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and improving. Pupils feel very safe and attitudes to learning are improving.
- The executive headteacher has inspired and enabled rapid improvements. Staff morale is high and the school is ambitious to continue to improve.
- Good-quality relationships and mutual respect between staff and pupils promote pupils' learning and personal development well.
- The governing body challenges and supports the school strongly. Its members are aware of what the school needs to do to improve further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Attendance is improving but a small number of pupils do not attend regularly and this affects their achievement.
- A small minority have attitudes to learning that are not as consistently positive as most other pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, improvement planning, the use of pupil premium and sports funding, and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and governance.
- Each class was observed several times.
- The inspector listened to pupils read aloud and talked with them about their work.
- The work of the school was discussed with those who have responsibility for leadership and management, including senior leaders and governors.
- The responses to 11 staff questionnaires completed during the inspection and discussions with staff were taken into account.
- There were five responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also considered 22 parents' responses to a recent questionnaire used to gather their views of the school.

## Inspection team

Robert Ellis, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2012 in its current temporary accommodation.
- The school is smaller than average and currently has provision for pupils in two classes: Reception and Year 1.
- The school is growing and plans to move to larger accommodation later this year.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils speak English as their main language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who need extra help or who have a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The school does not use any off-site provision for its pupils.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on improvements to attendance to ensure all pupils are challenged and supported so they attend school more regularly.
- Develop pupils' attitudes to learning so that they are consistently positive in all subjects, take pride in their work and are motivated to achieve well.
- Ensure a smooth transition to the school's new accommodation so learning is not disrupted.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Most children enter the Reception classes with skills, knowledge and understanding lower than typical for their age, particularly in their language, communication and social skills.
- Pupils are taught the sounds that letters make and use their phonics skills well to read and spell unfamiliar words.
- In lessons, language and communication skills are developed well. As pupils progress from Reception to Year 1 they develop the skills they need to be successful in their reading and writing. This was shown clearly in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were planning a story about aliens visiting Earth.
- Rapid progress in lessons is helping pupils catch up. However, there are still several children who are working at levels which are significantly below those typical for their ages.
- Pupils known to be eligible for additional funding are supported well. Gaps in attainment between eligible pupils and their peers have closed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good-quality help and support. Evidence from school information and scrutiny of pupils' work shows these pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils enjoy learning and say they particularly enjoy the Friday physical education lessons. They understand why these are important for healthy living and keeping fit.
- The previous gaps in attainment between boys and girls have been eliminated. The school keeps a close eye on the performance of different groups and makes sure that none are left behind. This demonstrates that the school is very inclusive and promotes equal opportunities well.
- The most-able pupils are challenged and supported successfully to achieve the highest levels of attainment that they are capable of achieving.
- Pupils take advantage of the helpful advice and guidance they are given to improve their work. Pupils say they enjoy reading and teachers help them develop the skills they need to read for work and pleasure.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- The consistently good teaching across the school promotes good learning. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating activities which are pitched at the right level for all the different groups of pupils.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin good learning. Adults in the classroom know the pupils well and consistent management of behaviour ensures an atmosphere that promotes good learning and mutual respect.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use probing questions to identify if pupils have understood what they are learning and if they are ready to move on. Pupils are expected to answer questions using full sentences and this helps develop their language and communication skills.
- Much of the teaching excites and engages pupils fully. They particularly enjoy activities that encourage them to use their imagination and practical skills.
- Additional adults are trained well and work in partnership with class teachers. They lead learning with groups of pupils and during whole-class activities they ensure pupils are listening carefully, behaving sensibly and understand what they have to do.
- The school is aware that good teaching is key to pupils making good progress. Regular training is supporting teachers in improving their practice, which in turn helps to provide better learning opportunities for pupils.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's code of conduct and respond positively to the school's system of rewards. Pupils' achievements are recorded and celebrated. Pupils applauded spontaneously when a selected pupil read aloud the work they had just completed.
- Pupils say that behaviour is generally good and that bullying is rare. They are confident that any instances of poor behaviour reported to staff are dealt with effectively. Staff and parents agree that behaviour is good.
- Behaviour around the school is good and pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils and adults sit down to have lunch together. This creates a calm family atmosphere at lunchtime.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and are cared for well. Parents and staff agree. Pupils show that they know how to keep themselves safe around the school site and how to deal with crossing the road and going to the park.
- Pupils respect the school environment and are kind and helpful to each other. All pupils socialise and play well together. Good use is made of the small outside area. For example, pupils were working together and using their imagination to make a giant birthday cake from soil, sand and other items during morning break.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and try to do their best in lessons. A small minority of pupils sometimes lose interest and these pupils need frequent prompting by adults before they can continue with their work. A few pupils will stop if they encounter a problem and wait for someone to come to help them, rather than attempting to find their own solution to it.
- Attendance is improving and most pupils attend school regularly. However, a small number of pupils do not come to school as often as they should and, consequently, attendance overall is below the national average for primary schools. The school is working hard to challenge and support the families of children who have poor patterns of attendance.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The executive headteacher is working successfully with staff, pupils and parents to improve the school. Teachers are held to account for the progress that pupils in their class make.
- Senior leaders check the quality of teaching regularly by visiting lessons, working alongside teachers, looking at pupils' work and analysing their progress. This ensures that they have the information they need to challenge and support staff to improve further. Teachers' pay progression is closely linked to pupils' progress and whole-school development targets.
- The school development plan identifies the right areas for improvement. It takes account of the changes that will need to be made as the school moves to the new site and grows to accommodate additional year groups.
- The arrangements for using additional funding are sensible and ensure that the funds benefit the pupils for whom they are intended. For example, some of the funding is used to provide focused support and challenge in literacy and mathematics.
- The range of subjects is planned well and meets the needs of the pupils. The school is always looking to make further improvements to provide a more imaginative and stimulating range of activities. Pupils enjoy the good range of visits and activities that enrich their experience of school life.
- Good use is made of the local area to support learning and pupils' development. For example, pupils are escorted to an adjacent playground at lunchtime to extend the range of physical activities that are available.
- The school's sports funding is used to employ a professional coach who leads physical education sessions which the pupils enjoy.
- The school has positive relationships with other schools and agencies, including the local authority, to ensure that pupils get the help and support they need. A parent liaison officer acts

as a close link between families and the school to assist parents with behaviour, health issues or general concerns. Parents are very positive about the quality of the support they receive from the school.

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. All the necessary checks on staff have been completed and recorded systematically in the school's single central register.
- The outside area next to the Reception class is being developed to provide an additional useful space for learning. During the inspection pupils were unable to use this area as landscaping and the installation of railings around the decked area had not been completed. It is expected that this work will be completed shortly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The caring and inclusive nature of the school supports their personal and social development particularly well. Lessons provide pupils with good opportunities to explore their own attitudes towards others. Several pupils said how much they enjoyed assemblies.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Members of the governing body have a good range of skills that enable them to challenge and support the school to improve. Governors have identified what additional skills are needed and are looking to recruit additional governors to strengthen the governing body further. Governors know about the management of staff performance and what is being done to improve the quality of teaching. They have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching across the school but are sometimes too reliant on information provided by school leaders. Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance information but do not know how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally. Finances are given close scrutiny and statutory responsibilities to ensure pupils are safe and cared for are met. Governors work closely with the school's leaders and are ambitious for the school to continue to grow to become an outstanding school which is at the heart of its local community.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138263
<b>Local authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	425453

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tom Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matt Rampton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7635 4256
<b>Email address</b>	southwarkfreeschool@gmail.com



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