

Walnut Tree Walk Primary School

Walnut Tree Walk, London, SE11 6DS

Inspection dates

24–25 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has created a highly inclusive school. Pupils, parents and staff rightly describe it as a 'family'.
- Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is impeccable. Pupils are eager to learn. They are proud of their school and considerate towards one another.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. The school keeps pupils very safe. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils make good academic and personal progress throughout the school.
- No group falls behind. Disabled pupils and those with a range of additional needs consistently do well. Disadvantaged pupils do as well as others in the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Activities in the Nursery and Reception classes are inviting, and stimulate the children to learn well.
- Teaching is consistently strong, enabling most pupils to do well.
- Marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve.
- Senior and middle leaders check pupils' progress carefully. They provide effective extra support for those at risk of falling behind.
- Leaders ensure that teachers teach well. They provide effective support for new teachers, so that they fit in quickly and contribute well to pupils' achievement. This has ensured that teaching and achievement have remained good.
- Governors make sure that teachers are appropriately rewarded for the quality of their work where it is particularly deserved.
- Governors are closely involved in the life of the school. They are supportive and able to hold the school to account.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and it is well placed to improve further..

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils do not always receive the challenge they need to do as well as they could.
- Plans for improvement are not always sufficiently specific in setting milestones to be achieved by particular dates.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 23 lessons across a range of subjects. Two were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors observed two assemblies. They visited the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at samples of their work.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers with responsibilities for specific subjects, a representative of the local authority, and groups of pupils. A meeting was held with the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and two other members.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 11 questionnaires.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection. They took account of 48 responses to the online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school’s own views of how well it is doing, its plans for the future, and the minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils’ attainment and progress. Inspectors also examined safeguarding information, and records relating to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Graham Mabelson	Additional inspector
Joyce Lydford	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Walnut Tree Walk Primary is a little larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those known to be eligible for the pupil premium) is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is higher than average. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra help in class (school action) is lower than average. The proportion who need more help than this (school action plus) or who have a statement of special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that more is expected of the most able pupils, and that they are given all the help that they need to reach higher standards and make faster progress.
- Sharpen plans for future improvement, so that more specific milestones are set for what needs to be achieved by particular dates.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has created a loyal team who all work successfully together to maintain good learning and good teaching in a supportive and caring context.
- Senior leaders and leaders of subjects understand their school well. Working in close partnership, they smoothly manage the day-to-day running of the school.
- Subject leaders are effective in their roles. Together with senior leaders, they make sure that the progress of pupils is carefully checked so that all groups make good progress. They are effective in checking the quality of the teaching and providing helpful advice and guidance to ensure that teaching is consistently good.
- Leadership is not outstanding because plans for the future are not always sharp enough. Plans cover the right priorities. However, it is not clear how improvements are to be achieved, and by what stages and dates.
- The local authority provides an effective partnership. A representative, who knows the school well, ensures that, among other areas of provision, checks are made on the quality of teaching.
- The school provides a wide range of subjects that cover the important things that pupils are expected to learn. The breadth of what is taught is clear from discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their books. More information is included in 'Natty News' (the newspaper written by pupils) and the wide range of topics in wall displays. There are clear indications in displays around the school that pupils are taught not just to know other people's religions, but to understand them too.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. The stimulating programme of clubs, trips and visits gives them an awareness of business and of university. Such initiatives are successful in giving pupils something to aspire to in their future lives.
- The school makes good use of the additional sport funding. More pupils are learning to swim than was the case before the funding was allocated. The spending is checked effectively. For example, the school noted that girls were not choosing as many sporting activities as boys and has used part of the funding to increase the range of sports available for them.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well. They take an active interest, visiting the school and setting up forums where they can meet parents to share ideas.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of how well the pupils achieve in relation to those in other schools, using both published figures and the school's own figures to evaluate pupils' achievement.
 - Governors have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching, and visit classes to see for themselves how well the pupils are learning. They have an accurate understanding of the link between teachers' pay and the progress made by pupils, and this ensures good value for money.
 - Governors make sure that the additional funding for the pupil premium and for the promotion of sports is spent wisely, and ensure that it is having a positive impact.
 - Governors are well trained and knowledgeable about safeguarding issues and safe recruitment. They carry out their statutory obligation to keep the pupils safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and heritages are extremely polite and respectful to all adults, and get on extremely well with one another.
- All members of the school community, adults and children alike, share a belief in the importance of respecting one another's values. In this way, the school fosters excellent relationships and there is no discrimination against others.
- Pupils' exemplary behaviour reflects the school's highly effective promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All those who spoke to inspectors reported their highly positive experience of being at the school. A typical comment was, 'This is our second home.' Pupils' love of their school was evident from their pride in one another's achievements shown in assembly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils told inspectors that they feel completely safe. Parents who spoke to inspectors and who responded to Parent View were unanimous in agreeing that the school keeps pupils safe, happy and free from bullying.
- School records confirm that instances of unkindness between pupils are few and far between.

- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They understand potential risks in using computers, and are taught to avoid possible dangers associated with life in the middle of the city.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a wide variety of enjoyable activities for the many children who attend. They also provide excellent opportunities for them to mix harmoniously with pupils older and younger than themselves.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good, with no major areas of weakness. This results in pupils making good academic progress and enjoying their learning.
- Teaching is not outstanding because it does not always challenge the most able pupils to excel. They are not always sufficiently stimulated to work as quickly or ambitiously as they could.
- Pupils learn well because they are motivated and do not get bored. Clear lesson planning means that pupils understand what they are expected to achieve.
- Questioning is used skilfully to keep pupils alert and interested, and to challenge them to think for themselves.
- The teaching of literacy is effective. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and are given many chances to discuss ideas and write about interesting topics.
- The teaching of mathematics supports pupils' good progress. Teachers ensure that pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts is secure before they proceed to the next level.
- Teaching assistants work effectively, particularly with pupils who are struggling or who have a range of additional needs. They are not so effective in their support for the most able because the work assigned to pupils is not always as challenging as it could be.
- Marking is used effectively to help pupils think about how they can improve their work.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress, and no group falls behind. This shows how pupils benefit from the school's commitment to equality for all.
- Achievement is not, however, outstanding. The achievement of the most able pupils varies from year to year, and is not as consistent as that of other groups. In tests taken at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the most able pupils tend to do less well than in other schools.
- From starting points below those expected for their age, pupils as a whole make steady progress throughout their time at school. They leave Year 6 with results in reading, writing and mathematics that are typically a little above average.
- The school provides well for pupils who have a range of additional needs. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs consistently make good progress. This is because their needs are recognised early, sometimes as early as the Nursery class, and effective support is quickly put in place.
- Pupils from a wide range of different heritages, and those who speak English as an additional language, make equally good progress. This is because their needs are also identified early and effective support is given, both within the classroom and in small withdrawal groups.
- Reading is taught effectively. Pupils told inspectors that they were encouraged to read at home. Many lessons take books as their starting points. In Year 6, for example, pupils were learning about the origins of the First World War. They were stimulated to a deeper understanding of the topic by reading Michael Morpurgo's novel *War Horse*, told from the point of view of a horse in the midst of battle.
- The school has a positive effect on the learning of disadvantaged pupils. Their progress is carefully checked, and extra support is provided promptly for those at risk of falling behind. As a result, these pupils make similar progress to others in reading, writing and mathematics.
- With small class sizes in Year 6, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils varies from year to year, but is generally in line with that of disadvantaged pupils nationally. In 2014 there was no appreciable difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of others in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because they have many attractive and inviting activities that promote good learning. All the adults are caring and help the children to feel secure and ready to learn.
- When they join the Nursery, the children have a very wide range of language and number skills, and are at different stages of physical development. Through patient teaching, focused on their needs, they make good progress, leaving Reception with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age.
- Class teachers are skilled in developing the children’s language and number skills. In one Nursery activity, for example, a group of boys making nest cakes were stimulated to think about the shape of the pieces of chocolate and the colours of the cakes. The teacher ensured that the children used speech as fluently as possible.
- The early years provision is well led. Leaders focus strongly on sharing information about the children and regularly check how their academic, social and personal development is improving. As a result, any difficulties the children may have are quickly picked up, and effective support is put in place to help all children make good progress.
- The children behave well and play peaceably together. They are ready to take turns on the equipment. When sitting in a circle, they wait their turn patiently to answer questions.
- Children who have specific emotional or behavioural needs are handled calmly and sensitively, and encouraged to share fully in all the activities.
- Children are kept safe and feel secure. When the time comes for them to move from Nursery to Reception, or from Reception to Year 1, they are well prepared and move smoothly to the next stage of learning.

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	100589
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	448197

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	287
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wilf Thomas-Smith
Headteacher	Jeanne Carabine
Date of previous school inspection	26 May 2010
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