

Holmleigh Primary School

Dunsmure Road, London, N16 5PU

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The strong commitment to ensuring all pupils have an exceptional educational experience is apparent in everything that the school does.
- Leaders continually challenge themselves to maintain exemplary standards in academic achievement, physical well-being and personal and social skills.
- From low starting points, pupils reach average standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents significantly more rapid progress than average.
- Teaching is outstanding. Leaders, including governors, ensure teachers get excellent support to maintain the very best practice.
- Teachers provide activities that meet the needs of all learners, so that pupils learn exceptionally well in lessons.
- Teachers' explanations are always clear, so pupils know what to do and how to be successful at the tasks they are given.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils show high levels of interest in learning and concentrate well in lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and of what pupils can achieve academically. Pupils rise to the challenge by being well mannered and thoroughly committed to learning.
- Governors support and challenge senior leaders effectively to maintain excellence in all areas, including teaching and learning.
- Pupils from different groups achieve equally well. For example, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress because their needs are well met by skilled teaching assistants.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school: 'The children love their school and are thriving in it.' This comment is typical of the high regard in which the school is held.
- Pupils feel very safe at school. They enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.
- The school's curriculum is exceptionally rich. Subjects are enhanced by the judicious choice of visitors and trips which help embed learning and generate motivation and excitement.
- Pupils benefit from a diverse range of sporting opportunities which enhances their physical well-being.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. Consequently, pupils are exceptionally well prepared to start secondary school.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years provision, which ensures they have the necessary skills to succeed in Year 1.
- Leaders do not analyse children's progress in the early years as well as they do in the rest of the school. Consequently, the most-able children do not always make rapid progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons. Seven of these were jointly observed with the headteacher. They looked at how pupils were learning in every class and scrutinised work pupils had completed over time in their books.
- The inspection team held meetings with staff, pupils, the Chair of Governors and a representative from the local authority, as well as attending three assemblies and listening to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online Parent View survey, as well as correspondence from, and meetings with, parents during the course of the inspection. They also considered the 11 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, logs of behaviour incidents, attendance figures, the school’s self-evaluation and development planning. They also looked at checks on the quality of teaching and information related to pupils’ academic performance.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Raminder Arora

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holmleigh is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than average, although there is a high number of pupils with statements of special educational needs, given the size of the school. Three quarters of the pupils with statements are also eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with 14 different groups represented in varying proportions. Three quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language; some are at the very early stages of learning English. These proportions are far higher than those found nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority) is much higher than the national average.
- The early years provision comprises of a Nursery class that some children attend part time and some full time, as well as a Reception class that all children attend full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The governing body has recently changed, so a number of members are new, including the Chair of Governors who was appointed in October 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure a greater proportion of the most-able children in the early years provision make rapid progress by rigorously checking their academic progress and putting in measures to accelerate it where appropriate.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school promotes its ethos of respect for all in everything it does. It is highly ambitious for all its pupils and works exceptionally effectively to ensure that, whatever their starting points or personal circumstances, each and every pupil has a chance to excel and enjoy their education.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, consistently challenge one another to improve practice. For example, results in reading dipped in 2013 at the end of Key Stage 2. Leaders quickly brought in new initiatives so that the issue was swiftly addressed. They were able to do this because they have a thorough understanding of what the school does well and make very careful checks on pupils' academic, physical and social well-being.
- Middle leaders are equally effective in their roles. They have been supported to develop their practice well. They are skilled at checking that pupils make rapid progress in the subjects they lead. Middle leaders contribute to maintaining the outstanding quality of teaching by supporting colleagues to develop their subject knowledge. They work together to promote strong links to reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum so that pupils have plenty of opportunities to hone these crucial skills.
- Leaders think carefully about the best use of the pupil premium funding. This is shared with governors and parents on the school's informative website. The impact of funded initiatives is carefully analysed so that leaders know which ones are most effective. Consequently, last academic year, the vast majority of disadvantaged pupils made rapid progress and gaps between them and their classmates narrowed.
- The system for managing teachers' performance is exceptionally effective. Teachers' targets take into account their interests and career aspirations. Leaders then source relevant training to meet any development needs identified. As with everything else the school does, high expectations for pupils' academic, physical and social well-being are central to this process.
- Exceptionally positive relationships are at the heart of the school. Leaders have created a highly cohesive community where members value the quality of what is on offer. All grow and learn from each other in an atmosphere free of negativity and discrimination.
- The school's total commitment to equality of opportunity is evident in all that the school does. Pupils with often very complex needs are fully involved in all activities alongside their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are equally articulate as their native speaking classmates. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and of different faiths feel equally valued and represented within the broad and inclusive curriculum.
- The curriculum is very rich. During their time at the school, pupils have the opportunity to go on many trips that enhance their learning. From using the local river for water sports and cycling, to exchange visits to families in Italy, Turkey and Poland, these trips enhance pupils' written work and teach pupils a range of invaluable social and personal skills. In this way, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for secondary school as well as life in modern Britain and beyond.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted. The many opportunities to mix with people from different backgrounds, and the emphasis on courtesy and equality, mean pupils have exemplary and wide-ranging social skills. The inspirational nature of the curriculum offers genuine moments of awe and wonder. Pupils reflect on moral choices through carefully chosen books as well as in specific lessons and assemblies. The school appreciates the wide range of cultures represented in its community and ensures that they are all reflected in the curriculum. From Morris dancing to Chinese New Year, and the German Christmas Market to Turkish cuisine, all are shared and celebrated, enriching lives and fostering the fundamental British values of tolerance and respect.
- Holmleigh has always been good at developing sporting excellence among its pupils, regularly winning trophies and medals. Leaders have used the primary school physical education and sport funding highly effectively to enhance this provision further and provide an even more diverse range of sports. This gives increased numbers of pupils a chance to excel. Pupils from the very youngest Nursery children right through to Year 6 have activities they can take part in. From yoga to fencing, rigger babies to Tae Kwon Do, alongside the more familiar football and street dance, there is something to interest all. Consequently, participation rates are high. The regular morning aerobic dance sessions in the playground, enjoyed by both disabled and able-bodied pupils as well as staff and parents, start the day with a boost.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are robust, so pupils say they feel safe and their parents wholeheartedly agree. Leaders ensure that all staff are fully confident in how to deal with any safeguarding issues. All relevant training is up to date and policies and procedures are exemplary.
- The local authority and the school have a very positive relationship. Senior local authority staff and the adviser linked to the school have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school's practice. They

provide robust challenge to ensure leaders continue to deliver an outstanding quality of education.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective. The new governing body is developing its skills and knowledge quickly by accessing the comprehensive range of courses on offer from the local authority. Governors have looked at data relating to the school's academic performance. Consequently, they understand how well the school performs compared to other schools.
- Governors ensure that finances are deployed with maximum impact on pupils' well-being. They know, for example, how well the sport funding is used to provide an excellent range of sporting opportunities. The governing body is very clear as to how performance targets maintain high quality teaching and learning. The governors are aware that teachers need to meet their targets to get a pay rise. The governing body knows that there are strong systems in place to support all teachers to improve continually their skills and knowledge.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are charming and courteous and look out for each other. It is common to hear comments in lessons such as, 'Shall I pass you a pencil?'
- Pupils respond exceptionally well to staff's consistently high expectations. From the very youngest, pupils follow instructions to the letter and without delay. This means that absolutely no time is lost for learning. For example, on the second morning of the inspection, many pupils had taken part in an invigorating aerobic activity in the playground before school. Despite this excitement, pupils were all in class and working mere minutes later.
- Pupils really want to learn. The level of motivation and engagement is palpable. Pupils focus in lessons and apply themselves diligently to their work. This has a strong impact on the progress they make.
- Pupils are extremely positive about behaviour. They state that lessons are never disrupted and that everyone gets on well at playtimes. Parents wholeheartedly agree that pupils are well behaved.
- To prepare pupils for life beyond primary school, there is a concerted focus on self-control. The older pupils do not need to be supervised when walking from the hall to their classroom after assembly because they intrinsically do the right thing.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Systems for securing the site are robust. Rigorous procedures underpin the work the school does with its most vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils and parents are unanimous in stating children feel safe in school. Pupils can explain what makes them feel safe. They appreciate the ways in which the school teaches them to stay safe. They understand not to talk to strangers, how to cross the road, and that drugs and electricity can harm you.
- Pupils have a particularly well-developed understanding of internet safety. They use an acronym which reminds them of key rules, including, crucially, never to give away personal details or arrange to meet anyone who has contacted you online.
- Pupils are very clear on the many guises bullying can take. For example, they have a clear understanding of what racist bullying means and quote examples from the history of the Civil Rights movement as solid reasons why it will never take hold in their school. They are equally clear that other types of discrimination, such as on grounds of gender or religion, would not be tolerated either.
- Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying. They explained to inspectors that this was because they know how to 'talk out' problems so things do not escalate. 'Team work makes the dream work' is one of the school's mottos, and pupils genuinely subscribe to this and quote it as evidence that they all get along.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers are highly skilled at ensuring pupils learn well. Pupils report that they always know what to do in lessons because teachers are very clear when explaining tasks. This is exactly what inspectors saw in the lessons they observed.
- Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils' exemplary attitudes mean that they are motivated to live up to those expectations. This has a very positive impact on the standard of pupils' written and oral work across subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is very well sequenced. Pupils are given opportunities to practise a particular

concept and then use it to solve problems. This helps to show how well they understand. Teachers then step in to support any who have not yet mastered the new learning.

- Pupils love reading and read a wide range of books. They are given opportunities throughout the week to read and discuss books. The support they get is of high quality. During a one-to-one reading session, the teaching assistant provided a mobile device for a pupil to look up further information to complement the book he was reading. This not only enhanced his general knowledge but motivated him to continue developing his reading skills.
- Because the use of the correct language is constantly reinforced in lessons, pupils develop a real desire to expand their vocabulary. Pupils therefore become highly articulate and their writing becomes mature and fluent. In lessons and books, the inspectors found countless examples of pupils using ambitious words. From 'devastated', to describe the aftermath of the Great Fire of London in Year 2, to 'disgruntled', used by Year 6 in their diary entries written from someone else's perspective, pupils rise to the challenge.
- Staff create opportunities throughout the day to prompt pupils to think and recall what they have already learnt. In lessons and assemblies, teachers, including the headteacher, ask relevant and skilful questions that challenge and develop pupils' ideas.
- Pupils know what they have done well in their written work in various subjects because they find the marking system easy to understand. Teachers give pupils very clear, precise guidance which ensures they know what they have to do to improve. Pupils are given regular time to act upon that guidance, which reinforces their understanding.
- All the parents who completed the online survey agreed that their children are taught well. Parents who spoke to inspectors or sent letters to the inspection team were also very positive about how much their children had learnt and how well their children's needs were met.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress to reach standards at least in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. This represents outstanding achievement from their starting points.
- The high aspirations and expectations that characterise the school's approach ensure that the most able are challenged in lessons. Consequently, the progress they make across Key Stage 2 has improved and was above the national expectation in 2014. The proportion reaching the higher Level 6 also increased in mathematics and grammar.
- Gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates in 2014 were over four and a half terms behind in mathematics, nearly five terms in reading and just over two and a half terms in writing. Gaps between them and other pupils nationally were slightly better, at just under three terms in mathematics and writing and just over three terms in reading. However, this cohort made better progress than other pupils nationally in all subjects. Pupils currently in school supported by this funding made exceptionally rapid progress last year, so gaps are narrowing in all year groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make exceptionally rapid progress because teachers plan carefully to ensure tasks are appropriate for them. The excellent support they get from highly skilled teaching assistants is also a significant factor in their success.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups do equally well because leaders have the same high expectations of all groups. Inspectors spoke to parents from different groups and all were equally positive about how well their children were doing. The strong focus on vocabulary development supports those who speak English as an additional language to become proficient speakers and writers.
- Leaders check pupils' academic performance in all subjects to ensure pupils acquire the skills and understanding they need to move on to the next phase of their education. This ensures pupils are well placed to tackle the demands of the secondary school curriculum.

The early years provision

is good

- The skills children have when they start their education vary. Many have hitherto spoken only their home language and so are well behind their English speaking peers in terms of English language development. Multilingual staff ensure that these children catch up during their time at the school.
- Children achieve well because teaching is good and activities motivate them and build on their interests. For example, the Reception class did a lot of work on treasure maps because a child brought one in from home and others were fascinated. The headteacher took this idea on board and buried some 'treasure' in

the garden, using two sticks to indicate the place. Children subsequently drew very intricate maps of their own, using the well-known phrase 'x marks the spot'. They were delighted when teachers gave them the opportunity to experiment with ageing the paper so their maps looked very realistic.

- Standards at the end of Reception have risen since the previous inspection. Last year, the proportion reaching a good level of development was slightly above the national average. This means that children are well prepared for moving on to Year 1. This is because leaders have been effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- Staff interact well with children. They ask probing questions that help children develop good language skills and an understanding of cause and effect. During the inspection, children were comparing making juice in a blender with squeezing the fruit by hand. They could see how much more juice you get using a machine and feel how difficult it is to exert the force necessary by hand. The activity excited them so much that they were bursting to express their ideas. The adult with them provided key vocabulary for them to use and they all made rapid strides in their speaking.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. Children concentrate really well on activities because they are interested and motivated. They respond well to staff's high expectations of behaviour by following instructions immediately and thoroughly. This means learning time is maximised. For example, during the inspection, children quickly tidied away the resources they had been playing with and made their way to assembly in an exceptionally sensible and timely manner.
- Children are kept equally safe in the early years provision as they are in the rest of the school. There is a clear focus on teaching children to keep themselves safe. Children know what to do if they feel upset and how to avoid upsetting others.
- Leadership of early years is good. Leaders know the children well and ensure that planning is based on children's interests. This ensures that levels of engagement in learning are exceptionally high. Leaders play a key role in supporting staff to improve their practice continually.
- The early years is not outstanding because leaders do not analyse information about children's progress equally effectively as they do in the rest of the school. While there is no doubt that those from lower starting points catch up quickly, it is less clear whether similar proportions of the most-able children are being given the opportunity to make more than expected progress.

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	100257
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	453201

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Megan Holden
Headteacher	Kevin Ward
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 March 2008
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