

# Seven Sisters Primary School

South Grove, Tottenham, London N15 5QE

**Inspection dates** 19–20 January 2016

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- After a period of change, when it was led by interim leaders, the school is now well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. With good support from governors and local authority advisers, they have successfully improved teaching so that most groups of pupils now achieve well.
- Governors have refined their skills and are very involved in the school. They have an accurate knowledge of its strengths and what it needs to improve further.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and creative variety of subjects. The curriculum interests them and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils have supportive and mature relationships with each other as well as with adults at the school. They enjoy their learning, try hard and behave well.
- Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe and ensures that they make good progress.
- Teachers know the pupils well. They are skilful in planning activities in lessons which engage and generally challenge most groups of pupils.
- Good provision in the early years means that children progress well, and most are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils in all year groups are making good progress. The benefits of the improvements in teaching are now clearly being seen across the school.
- Effective provision for pupils with special educational needs means they make good progress that helps them catch up with their peers.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders do not make enough use of some of the most proficient teachers to develop the skills of new and less experienced staff.
- The most-able pupils are not always challenged to reach the highest levels at the end of Years 2 and 6.

## Full report

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

- Eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by:
  - using the best teaching as a model for teachers early in their careers or new to the school
  - checking that the school's most-able pupils are all sufficiently challenged.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- After a period of significant change, the morale of everyone in the school is now high. This is reflected in the positive views which the pupils and parents hold about the school and its staff. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils; there is a collective understanding that pupils should work hard and do their best work all of the time. The success of school leaders in ensuring that teaching quality has improved rapidly shows a strong capacity for further improvement.
- Middle leaders are skilled and hold a clear view of how improvements to the quality of teaching translate directly into improved outcomes for pupils. They take responsibility for their areas of the school and have been instrumental in making significant improvements in teaching and rates of progress in all key stages.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have only recently taken up their roles. They work very well together and share a common goal: to make teaching the best it can be so that all pupils make good progress. Prior to this point, the leaders had begun to make significant improvements to the rates of progress made by pupils.
- Senior leaders observe lessons, analyse assessment information and look at pupils' workbooks to check that individuals or groups are not falling behind. The training and development of individual teachers is well planned and relates closely to the regular checks on the quality of their work. As a result, teachers are responsive and kept up to date with developments in teaching practices. New teachers are well supported and helped to gain mastery of their responsibilities quickly.
- The school is committed to ensuring that equal opportunities are well integrated in its work and therefore has a very inclusive approach. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Good relations are successfully promoted between the staff and the local community; for example, they offer advice and support on a range of issues to those parents who are new to the school.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils through a range of activities including individual support and small groups to support their reading. Funds are also used to support pupils' access to curriculum enrichment. This not only ensures that they make good progress but also enhances their well-being.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is carefully spent. Specialist coaches are employed to lead clubs and to pass on their expertise to school staff. Pupils take advantage of the wider options available. As a result, teaching and learning in PE lessons has improved, and pupils benefit from a good range of sports clubs and adventurous activities.
- The school makes very good provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils benefit from an exciting variety of subjects that support their academic progress and personal development. Work in pupils' books shows that they gain experience of an appropriate range of subjects, including PE, science and art. Pupils gain an understanding of British values, including democracy, through activities such as the work of the school council. As well as forming part of an interview panel for the new headteacher, pupils make suggestions to governors as to how to develop the school further. Through assemblies, class discussion and the wider curriculum, pupils are taught to be tolerant and to challenge discrimination. All this contributes to pupils leaving the school well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school works well with the local authority. Since the last inspection, the local authority has provided a wide range of helpful support. This includes evaluating the school's current performance and arranging for specialist consultants to work alongside school staff.
- The governance of the school is good.
  - Governors are diligent and honest in their interpretation of assessment information provided by the school and local authority. This enables them to check on pupils' progress and ask insightful questions. A recently commissioned review of governance provided them with the opportunity to reflect on their work and how they can become even better. They support and challenge senior leaders. This has led to rapid improvements at the school.

- Governors have specific responsibilities and visit the school regularly to gain secure, first-hand information. They keep a close eye on the management of teachers’ performance, making sure that teachers are accountable for pupils’ progress. Together with the staff, governors communicate their aspirations for the pupils to achieve very well so that the school will become a magnet for all families in the locality. They manage the finances very well and seek assurance that additional funding, for example for disadvantaged pupils and for sports, is used well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have ensured that all members of staff are trained in child protection procedures. All staff spoken to during the inspection are very aware of giving priority to placing a child’s safety above all other considerations. Key staff respond quickly to pupils who may be at risk and report concerns to appropriate agencies. They always ensure that follow-up action is taken, whenever needed.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and demonstrate positive, mature attitudes while sustaining their concentration for extended periods of time. This is because they become deeply involved with their work and generally rise to the challenges they are set. For example, in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were working together to compose sentences containing homophones, their behaviour was impeccable as they were engrossed in the atmosphere which the teacher had carefully created. Pupils worked very well because the planning catered for their needs.
- Teachers have high expectations of the quality of work they expect from pupils in mathematics and English. Prompted by teachers, pupils try their best, with most making good efforts to present their work neatly. These high expectations are also evident in the range of other subjects, many of which are woven into topic areas. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils benefited from clear demonstrations of the difference between reversible and irreversible changes before planning their own practical investigations.
- Teachers use feedback well and at the right time in lessons. This motivates pupils. It also helps teachers to plan subsequent lessons so that work is not repeated and that it challenges pupils still further. Learning is rapid when teachers carefully shape teaching around pupils’ needs and hold pupils’ attention by making changes to the content when it is needed.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. The school has placed a love of reading high on its list of priorities and has recently introduced a new reading programme into the younger classes. This is already paying dividends. Some pupils, particularly those who join the school with low English fluency, receive additional support with their reading and literacy skills from support staff who help them to integrate into the school quickly.
- Teaching in mathematics and English is good because teachers make the lessons challenging for pupils. For example, literacy skills were used well by pupils in Year 1 who were learning how to use imperative verbs when writing instructions. Pupils are very proud of their work and keen to share what they have achieved. Books show that they are making very good progress. In the same class, some pupils speak very little English. However, because the work is carefully pitched at different levels of ability and with additional support, these pupils make the same good progress as others.
- Teachers new to the school have been well equipped to have the skills necessary to teach effectively. However, there are missed opportunities to use some of the most proficient teachers to develop the skills of new and less experienced staff.
- Teachers usually make sure that little time is wasted. They make good use of various approaches to show pupils how to do their best work, for example by telling them what a good piece of work will look like. Classroom and public areas are used well to reinforce a message of high expectation. Display work is of a good standard and this creates a sense of pride among all.
- Support staff make an important contribution to supporting pupils who find learning difficult. They work alongside teachers in class or lead small-group intervention work.
- In some cases, the teaching fails to take account of the needs of the school’s growing proportion of most-able pupils. School leaders are aware of this and have plans to address it through a new curriculum assessment programme.
- Parents speak very positively about the teaching, saying that the teachers are very keen to help their children do well; they have nothing but praise for the improvements made to develop the quality of the teaching.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and understand where to turn to for help should they need it.
- The staff actively promote positive messages about how to tackle and respond to bullying. Some pupils recalled a small number of incidents in the past, but say that these have decreased recently and are always followed up by senior staff
- Leaders have employed counsellors and learning mentors to ensure that pastoral support is available for pupils.
- Pupils are well aware of the need to be careful when using modern communication technology. They are alert to cyber bullying, for example, and understand the need to keep personal information secure.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the way the school ensures their child's safety.
- A recent school initiative is being used to develop more open attitudes to learning. This is promoting learning and self-confidence throughout the curriculum.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good.
- Teachers have ensured that pupils know that good behaviour is required and that they should try hard in their lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and keen to please. Their prompt responses, mature approach to working in groups and pairs, and ability to work on their own enhance their learning and contribute to their good progress
- Very good relationships with staff and pupils underpin the positive attitudes seen in lessons. Pupils show respect for others and are helpful and friendly to visitors, staff and their classmates.
- Pupils demonstrate maturity in the way they behave in the myriad of public corridors and staircases within the school.
- Rewards and sanctions are consistently given out by all staff. Pupils say the system of rewards combined with staff encouragement helps them to try hard to do their best. Parents are highly positive about behaviour in the school.
- Senior staff have forged close links with external agencies and provide sensitive support for pupils at risk of falling behind. Consequently, all pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential and make a positive contribution to life at the school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above that seen nationally. Rates of persistence absence have declined markedly.

## Outcomes for pupils **are good**

- Pupils' achievement has improved significantly since the last inspection. This is because of the improvements made in the quality of teaching. Pupils make good progress from different starting points. By the time they leave Year 6, they attain average results in mathematics together with results that are close to the national average in reading and writing. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good.
- Current pupils are making good progress. The standard of their work in Years 2 and 6 is rising so that a higher proportion are producing work that is above expectations. Inspection evidence matches the school's assessment information, which indicates that pupils are on course to make better progress than that seen last year at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are now developing a good understanding of the way letters link to the sounds they make (phonics) because this early reading skill is taught well. The new approach to reading started this year is already having a profound impact. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the Year 1 national screening check is set to improve and many are already achieving a good standard.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 work hard and with success to improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. The pitch of lessons is high and this means that most pupils have to pay close attention to their learning. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were learning how to express number sentences using algebra and to explain their reasoning to their peers.

- In all years, pupils' work books show a good coverage of the curriculum with high standards generally expected by teachers. However, at times the most-able pupils are not being adequately challenged by the work they are given.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress, particularly in learning to read and to express themselves, as a result of good-quality targeted support.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to provide extra support for their learning. For example, it is used to fund individual support to increase pupils' self-esteem and provide access to extra-curricular activities. As a result, these pupils make the same good progress as their classmates with no discernible gap in attainment, including when compared with the attainment of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave the school at the end of Year 6. The school is well placed to sustain the good progress pupils are now making because systems for improvement are rigorous.

## Early years provision

is good

- When children join the school in the early years, their skills and knowledge are generally below those that are typical for their age. Good-quality activities and support provided by staff help them make a good start to their learning and, as a result, they make rapid progress.
- Children also get off to a very good start in learning and are well prepared for Year 1 because of the strong relationships they form with the adults working with them. Adults give the children confidence to explore their environment and engage actively with the curriculum. Children are enthusiastic and work well together, clearly enjoying the activities which take place both indoors and outside.
- Children are given many opportunities to learn what outstanding behaviour looks like and how to play together cooperatively. They are considerate and behave well, with the teacher establishing a calm but authoritative tone for the setting.
- Teaching in the Reception and Nursery classes is good. Staff take into account children's interests. For example, children are learning about number in the role play surgery area when a doll is taken ill and they sing a song as they count pills (cubes) to make her better.
- The early years staff have developed close working partnerships with parents. Parents are welcomed into class particularly when their children are new to the school.
- Teachers make effective use of assessment information which is compiled into 'learning journey' books which are given to parents at the end of the Reception Year. These provide an informative summary of progress made over the year as well as being a much-valued keepsake.
- The indoor classroom is spacious, well organised and well resourced. This room is complemented by an easily accessible outside space which is well used throughout the year.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good and have improved children's achievement. The early years leader has instilled a vision of 'moving forward together' and has been responsible for creating a happy, safe and secure unit where children are keen to celebrate their successes.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	132253
<b>Local authority</b>	Haringey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001996

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	470
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Zena Brabazon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Murray
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8802 6670
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sevensistersprimary.co.uk">http://www.sevensistersprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:ssps@sevensisters.haringey.sch.uk">ssps@sevensisters.haringey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10–11 December 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. They are mainly from Turkish, Caribbean and Black African heritages. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is above average. Mobility is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability and are supported through a special educational needs statement or an education, health and care plan is high. The proportion receiving special educational needs support is low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their roles in September 2015 and were both new to the school.
- South Grove Children's Centre is located on site and is managed by the governing body. This provision is inspected separately.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- They heard some pupils read in Years 2, 4 and 6, and looked at samples of work throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records of pupils' behaviour, safety and attendance. They also looked at information on individual pupil's progress, anonymised records of teachers' performance and records of meetings of the governing body.
- They met with pupils and teachers and spoke to parents. A meeting was held with three members of the governing body, and another with a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were obtained through the few responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, as well as the school's own survey, and through the informal discussions which were held with parents of pupils at the school on both days of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Tim McLoughlin, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Rawlings	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Harvey	Ofsted Inspector



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