

# Solebay Primary – A Paradigm Academy

11 Solebay Street, London E1 4PW

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| <b>Inspection dates</b>                      | 12–13 January 2016   |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>          |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | Outstanding          |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good                 |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | Outstanding          |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | Good                 |
| Early years provision                        | Outstanding          |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The school is improving rapidly. New leaders have transformed it since September 2014. Senior leaders and members of the Paradigm Trust have successfully established an ambitious ethos where expectations of pupils' achievement are very high.
- Leaders and managers have been highly effective in driving improvements to all aspects of the school's work. Teaching quality has improved. The rate of pupils' progress has increased and their outcomes are now good.
- Very well-selected training and coaching for teachers and teaching assistants have secured good teaching, learning and assessment across the school.
- The curriculum supports pupils' learning very effectively. Pupils are highly motivated to work hard. Outings and activities capture pupils' interest and develop their understanding.
- Leaders have made sure that children get off to an outstanding start in the early years provision. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children make excellent progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare have improved and are outstanding. Pupils conduct themselves extremely sensibly and are highly enthusiastic learners. They have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe. In just over a year, new strategies have had a significant impact in improving attendance.
- The board of directors and the committees of the trust have a secure understanding of the school's performance. It provides a very effective balance of challenge and support to ensure that leaders continue to drive rapid improvements to the school's work.
- All these strengths show the school's very strong capacity to improve further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although achievement is rising, pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are not yet outstanding. There is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 where teachers have recently joined the school.

## **Full report**

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

- Raise pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by continuing to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Key Stage 2.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Tenacious and determined leadership at all levels has ensured that all aspects of the school's work have improved quickly and some are now outstanding. Working very closely with staff, senior and middle leaders, and members of the trust, the executive principal has established a culture where expectations of teaching and pupils' outcomes are exceptionally high. As a consequence, teachers are very determined to improve the quality of teaching and pupils are ambitious to do well.
- Senior leaders and members of the trust have made sure that all in the school community share a highly ambitious vision for the school. They strive to encourage the school's values of ambition, determination and integrity in all aspects of its work. This has supported the creation of an exceptionally cohesive learning community where discrimination is tackled extremely well.
- Through excellent partnership work across the trust, middle leaders from other trust academies have joined the school's leadership team and strengthened the impact of leadership. They play a key role in monitoring pupils' achievement through regular performance meetings with teachers. They have very high expectations of teaching quality and its effect on pupils' achievement, and they drive improvement within their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders make sure that teachers and teaching assistants attend high-quality training in order to develop consistency of approach to teaching reading, writing and mathematics in particular. Leaders make very regular checks on teaching, learning and assessment. They identify and tackle any underperformance robustly and without compromise.
- Leaders analyse and use the school's information about pupils' performance to check how well pupils make progress. They review and sample pupils' work very regularly. They use the information to identify where further improvements are needed to the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' outcomes further.
- The curriculum encourages pupils' enjoyment of learning extremely well. As a result, pupils are highly motivated to work hard and perform as well as they can. This has driven up pupils' achievement. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum provides a strong emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics, together with a broad and balanced range of other subjects. Enrichment events are exceedingly popular and include outings and visitors as well as activity days. The music curriculum is a particular highlight, enhanced by visiting performers who stimulate pupils' interest in music.
- The majority of parents are very positive about the improvements that leaders and members of the trust have made since September 2014. Typically, they are enthusiastic about the progress their children make. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the further development of the school through the recently formed parents' school council. Extremely close working with parents has already secured striking improvements to the range of extra-curricular clubs that the school provides as a result of suggestions from parents.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium for primary schools successfully enhances sporting provision at the school and increases opportunities for pupils to be physically active. Pupils benefit from a wide range of adventurous outdoor sessions, as well as additional swimming lessons.
- The pupil premium grant is used very effectively to ensure that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met and that they have an equal opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of school life. Leaders' actions to raise standards for disadvantaged pupils are highly effective. The support provided has helped these pupils to make rapid gains.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered very strongly. Through music and art, performances, recognising and celebrating pupils' successes, and through learning about a wide range of different cultures and faiths, leaders encourage respect and tolerance very successfully. Pupils are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective and thorough. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Record keeping is detailed and of high quality. Documentation is up to date and reflects the most recent guidance. Training for staff with specific responsibilities for safeguarding ensures that they are aware of current regulations. Staff are very aware of the school's safeguarding procedures and systems, and how to identify possible signs of abuse.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Directors of the trust are extremely experienced in securing improvement. They draw upon their

expertise in order to support the school and improve key aspects of its work dramatically. As a result, areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been tackled swiftly.

- Members of the trust measure the school's performance. They visit the school regularly to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and how effectively it supports pupils' achievement. Directors of the trust have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness and challenge leaders to improve the school further.

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

- Since the school joined the trust, leaders have wasted no time in helping teachers to develop their skills effectively so that teaching has improved and is now good. For example, leaders have made sure that the teaching of mathematics follows a consistent approach and enables pupils to practise their mathematical skills.
- Leaders have also ensured that teachers and teaching assistants use effective approaches to teaching phonics (the link between sounds and letters). Phonics is taught regularly and systematically, and pupils build their knowledge quickly. Information from regular measures of pupils' progress is used to check that pupils develop their knowledge of phonics steadily. Pupils at risk of falling behind are identified quickly and given additional support that helps them to keep up. Pupils new to the school, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, benefit from extra sessions that help them to catch up with the others.
- Pupils' reading is well supported through regular reading sessions. Pupils enjoy a wide range of well-chosen texts that support their comprehension skills and encourage pupils' appreciation of books. Pupils speak confidently about their favourite authors and the types of books they like to read.
- Pupils write regularly in a wide variety of subjects and this helps them to make good progress in writing. Pupils are encouraged to present their work neatly. Handwriting skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils develop fluent handwriting. Teachers teach technical vocabulary securely and pupils use specific words confidently in their work. For example, in geography, pupils discussing the geographical features of landscape located around the equator were able to explain how proximity to the equator influences the natural features of these areas.
- Music teaching is a particular strength. For example, through fun exercises pupils improve their diction, and singing promotes pupils' listening skills and encourages turn-taking. Whole-school singing assemblies develop pupils' ability to sing both with an instrumental accompaniment and without, using good pitch, intonation and dynamic awareness.
- Leaders have rapidly improved the effectiveness of teaching across the school. However, teaching is not outstanding because there remains some variability in teaching, learning and assessment in Key Stage 2 where teachers have recently joined the school. Leaders check teaching and identify quickly where additional support and guidance are needed, although this has not made sure that all teaching supports pupils in making outstanding progress.

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

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are exceedingly positive about learning and clearly understand the importance of working hard and attending every day so that they benefit from valuable education. Pupils are very keen to be rewarded for the quality of their work. For example, they are ambitious to receive postcards from senior leaders congratulating them for their hard work.
- Pupils move around the school extremely sensibly and show great care for the safety of others, for example when using the stairs. Pupils confirm that any incidents of bullying are now extremely rare. They are confident that adults will take very swift and effective action to deal with any issues that may arise, as the school's records show.
- The school's three values of ambition, determination and integrity are consistently encouraged. Pupils are exceedingly eager to be recognised by staff and other pupils for demonstrating these core qualities consistently.
- Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm. They know how to keep

themselves safe when using computers and information technology, and what steps to take to keep safe online. Pupils explain confidently the importance of keeping personal information secure. They are clear whom to speak to should they have any concerns. Pupils demonstrate exceedingly sensible attitudes to keeping safe when moving between the school site and the neighbouring park for sport and PE sessions, at breaktime and at the start and end of the day.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are very welcoming, polite and courteous. Pupils confirm that behaviour has improved considerably since the previous inspection and that any instances of low-level disruption are exceptionally rare.
- Pupils are extremely attentive and listen very carefully in lessons so that classrooms are very orderly and studious environments. Around the school, including at breaktimes, pupils' conduct is very mature and disciplined. Pupils move from one area of the school to another, for example for phonics sessions, extremely swiftly and calmly.
- The school building is bright, very well maintained, and graffiti and litter free. Pupils make a point of tucking in their chairs when they leave classrooms.
- Pupils' attendance is rigorously tracked and attendance rates have risen significantly since the previous inspection. Leaders have been very successful in making the importance of regular attendance abundantly clear to the whole school community. As a consequence, persistent absence is greatly reduced and attendance rates continue to rise.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- Leaders have made sure that pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has accelerated since the previous inspection so that outcomes are now good. School assessment information, and work in pupils' books, show that they typically make good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics as well as other subjects. Pupils make particularly strong progress in early years provision and in Key Stage 1.
- Through daily phonics practice, pupils build reading skills securely and enjoy books. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average in 2014 and 2015.
- Pupils at very early stages of learning English are helped to develop their understanding of phonics quickly. They also benefit from additional sessions that help them build their spoken and written knowledge and achieve well in literacy, mathematics and other subjects.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. Good challenge is evident in the teaching of reading for these pupils. As a result some most-able pupils make rapid progress.
- The very small number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or disability benefit from tailored support and interventions. This ensures that they make similar good progress to their peers in the school.
- The support provided through the use of pupil premium funding helps disadvantaged pupils currently at the school to make rapid gains. As a result, at the end of Key Stage 1, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils exceeded others in the school and disadvantaged pupils did as well as all pupils nationally.

### **Early years provision**

**is outstanding**

- From their individual starting points, children make very swift progress and build key skills quickly. As a result of exceptional leadership and management of early years provision since September 2014, children's previously low outcomes have risen significantly. More children reached average standards at the end of the Reception Year in 2015 compared with the national average. The school's current achievement information and work in children's books shows that they make very rapid progress, particularly in writing and in learning about mathematical shapes and measures. When children move to Year 1, they are outstandingly well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have tackled key priorities for action sharply and have made sure that children benefit from very high-quality teaching, learning and assessment in Nursery and Reception classes. Expectations of what the children can achieve are very high. Demanding activities help children to increase their knowledge and understanding in basic literacy and numeracy skills. Specialist music teaching encourages children to

develop extremely strong musical awareness. Additional funding is used carefully and gaps between disadvantaged children and others have narrowed.

- Children's behaviour is outstanding. Home visits made by staff before children start, as well as close partnerships with parents, help children to settle quickly when they join the school. Adults in the early years provision are exceedingly positive role models and relationships are very warm and encouraging. Children share resources and demonstrate caring attitudes. For example, children in the Reception class made greetings cards for a member of the class who was unwell in order to help him to feel better quickly. Children follow routines very readily and are extremely keen to meet the high standards of behaviour that the adults expect, including walking sensibly and safely between the school and the neighbouring park. Children take responsibility very willingly for tidying away classroom equipment at the end of tasks, so that no time is wasted when they start new activities.
- Classrooms in the early years provision are attractive and well resourced. Children access the outside play deck area regularly for outdoor learning. In the neighbouring park, children's physical development is promoted effectively through accessing large climbing equipment. Enrichment activities reflect the children's interests. For example, following a recent visit to the Natural History Museum, children demonstrated excellent knowledge of the environment that dinosaurs inhabited. They talked confidently about landscapes covered in hot, erupting volcanoes.

## School details

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 138276        |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Tower Hamlets |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10009172      |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Free school  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–10   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 265  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Paradigm Trust board of directors  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Christopher Crozier  |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Amanda Phillips (executive principal), Janet Baker (interim principal)                           |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 8980 2414  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.solebayacademy.paradigmtrust.org">www.solebayacademy.paradigmtrust.org</a>   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:info@solebayacademy.paradigmtrust.org">info@solebayacademy.paradigmtrust.org</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 11–12 February 2014  |

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, on 1 September 2014, CET Primary School Tower Hamlets joined the Paradigm Trust and was renamed Solebay Primary – A Paradigm Academy. Solebay is one of four academies run by the Paradigm Trust.
- In mid-September 2014, the school moved onto a new site and into newly refurbished premises. The school makes use of local parks for PE and sports provision and at breaktime because there is no access to outdoor space on-site apart from a small play deck. The school day starts and ends in a neighbouring park where the school has arrangements to collect and dismiss pupils.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased significantly over the last 12 months. The school is currently average sized. The Nursery opened in September 2015. Children attend full time. Children in Reception also attend full time. There is one Nursery class and one Reception class. There are two classes in each year from Year 1 to Year 3. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are taught in two mixed-age classes. The school will continue to increase in size until there are two classes in each year from Nursery to Year 6.
- There were no pupils in Year 6 in 2015, so it is not possible to evaluate the performance of the school against the government’s floor targets.
- The school organises and manages breakfast provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons or parts of lessons. Some of these were joint observations with a senior leader. Inspectors also observed pupils at the breakfast club, at the start of the school day and at breaktime including the use of the neighbouring park.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, directors of the trust, and members of the parents' school council. Inspectors listened to pupils read, and looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information about pupils' achievement.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school including the school's own self-evaluation and improvement plan. Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also considered.
- Inspectors took into account 62 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's optional online staff survey. Inspectors met parents informally at the start of the school day, in the local park, to hear their views of the school.
- Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school on 12 February 2016 to gather additional evidence.

## Inspection team

|                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Jean Thwaites, lead inspector       | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Sean Flood                          | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Karen Matthews                      | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Madeleine Gerard (12 February 2016) | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Gill Jones (12 February 2016)       | Her Majesty's Inspector |



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