

Hoxton Garden Primary School

Ivy Street, Hackney, London N1 5JD

Inspection dates 23–24 February 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	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This school is led well by the executive headteacher and head of school. They have improved teaching dramatically since the last inspection.
- All groups of pupils achieve well in an environment that places the child at its heart.
- Governors have refined their skills and are very involved in the school. They have worked hard to ensure that the school has made rapid and sustained improvements.
- Teaching has rightly focused on improving pupils' skills in English and mathematics. These and other subjects promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils have supportive and mature working relationships with each other, as well as with adults at the school. They enjoy their learning, try hard and behave well.
- Leaders have improved the learning environment so that all pupils are proud of their school and the work that they do.
- Teachers know the pupils well. They are skilful in planning activities in lessons which engage and challenge most groups of pupils.
- Outstanding provision in the early years means that children progress well and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils in all year groups make good progress. The benefits of the improvements in teaching are clearly seen across the school.
- Helpful provision for pupils with special educational needs means they make good progress that enables them to catch up with their peers.
- Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe and ensures that they make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching and classroom management is of the very highest quality
- In a few instances, pupils do not concentrate as well as they should.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is as good as the very best by:
 - using the best teaching as a model for teachers early in their careers or new to the school
 - making sure that all classes are managed well so that pupils do not lose concentration
 - using the school's current performance management processes more efficiently so that any teaching not of the highest quality is improved quickly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the previous inspection, leadership capacity has increased significantly due to a new federation arrangement with two other local schools. The executive headteacher and head of school have led this school on a rapid journey of improvement in their drive to improve teaching and outcomes for all pupils. This has proved highly successful.
- The school is now a buoyant and high-achieving place of learning where teachers typically have extremely high expectations of pupils. The strong focus on developing pupils' core skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy has accelerated their progress and enables them to succeed. Staff understand that pupils should work hard and behave well. Parents and pupils hold very positive views about the school and its staff.
- Middle leaders are both skilled and enthusiastic. They hold a clear view of how the developments that they have put in place link directly into improved outcomes for pupils. They are rightly proud of their work and take responsibility for their areas of the school. Together with senior leaders, they have been instrumental in making significant improvements in teaching and rates of progress in all key stages.
- The executive headteacher and head of school share a common passion for success by striving for all teaching at the school to be of the very best quality. They are well on track to achieve this goal. Leaders at all levels observe lessons, analyse assessment information and look at pupils' workbooks to check that individuals or groups are not falling behind.
- Leaders plan the training and development of individual teachers very well and relate this closely to regular checks on the quality of their work. As a result, teaching is now good with some very strong practice in all key stages.
- The school is committed to ensuring that equal opportunities is well integrated in its work and therefore has a very inclusive approach. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils through a range of activities, including, for example, individual support and small group work to support their learning in English and mathematics. Funds are also used to support pupils' access to curriculum enrichment. This not only ensures that they make good progress but also enhances their personal 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 activities such as curling, kayaking and football.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These skills are successfully carried into other areas of the curriculum alongside the core academic skills. The wider curriculum supports pupils' academic progress and personal development in special themed weeks and events.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of British values, including democracy, through activities such as the work of the school council. Through assemblies, lessons and the wider curriculum, pupils are taught to be tolerant and to challenge discrimination. All of 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, local authority staff have provided a wide range of helpful support. This includes more intensive support through its 'Good to Great' programme.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are highly effective. They have been both reflective and diligent about how they make use of the assessment information provided by the school. They have rigorously challenged school leaders to improve outcomes robustly at all levels. They have not shirked from taking bold decisions when these are clearly in the interests of the pupils. Their work has been instrumental in securing 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 senior leaders and teachers are accountable for pupils' progress. 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 were very aware of giving priority to placing a child's safety above all other considerations. A strong culture of safety exists in the school, where key staff engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders to ensure that all pupils are supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers typically have extremely high expectations of the quality of work they expect from pupils in mathematics and English. Without needing prompting by teachers, pupils try their best, making very good efforts to present their work neatly. These high expectations are also evident in other curriculum subjects. In a Year 6 Spanish lesson, pupils benefited from clear demonstrations of how to ask common questions in Spanish before working with partners to ask and answer questions using their new skills.
- The school has a very clear approach to marking pupils' work. This is well embedded at the school. Feedback is used very well in both written and spoken form in lessons. Pupils respond well and use it to make further improvements to their work. Learning is particularly effective when teachers respond carefully to the needs of the pupils as the lesson unfolds and hold pupils' attention by making changes to the content if it is needed.
- In a very small number of lessons, the classes were not as expertly managed as they could be. This resulted in pupils finding it difficult to maintain concentration and their learning, as a result, was not good. At times, this was due to teachers providing too much structure when pupils were already keen to get on and work independently.
- Teachers are very skilled at making sure that space in all classrooms is very well used to reinforce learning. They set high expectations through the rich use of resources and dynamic displays. This supports pupils well and shows them that the teachers care deeply about their work and progress.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. The school has placed encouraging a love of reading high on its list of priorities and has recently introduced a new reading programme in Key Stages 1 and 2. A new library has also been built on the top floor of the school and is already paying dividends in promoting pupils' appetite for books.
- Teaching in mathematics and English is good because teachers make the lessons challenging for pupils. For example, numeracy skills were used well by pupils in Year 1 who were learning about how to use apparatus to help write number sentences. The teacher had carefully structured the class so that she was able to teach the least-able pupils more intensively. By the end of the lesson, many of these pupils had caught up with their peers. Support staff make a very useful contribution to supporting pupils who find learning difficult. They work alongside teachers effectively in class or lead small group intervention work.
- Parents speak very positively about teaching, saying that the teachers are very keen to help their children do well; they have nothing but praise for the improvements made to the quality of teaching.
- The school has effective systems in place to support teachers new to the school and staff appreciate the support and training they now receive. Many are now very proficient teachers. Senior leaders acknowledge that more opportunities to share good and outstanding practice could help others, including less experienced staff, to improve further.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Through the hard work of staff at the school, pupils show great confidence and awareness about how to be successful learners. 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 learning mentors and additional support staff to ensure that pastoral support is available for pupils. Key staff work very well with external agencies to ensure that all pupils are well cared for at the school. Pupils themselves also play a crucial role, such as the peer mediators in Year 5 who are very active in helping to ensure safe and productive playtimes.

- 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.
- In discussions and in their survey responses, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the way the school ensures children's safety.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. On a small number of occasions where pupils lose attention in some lessons, behaviour is not as good.
- Teachers ensure that pupils know that good behaviour is required and that they should try hard in their lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and show great respect for one another at all times. Their interest in each other's opinions, and very sensible approach to working in groups and pairs, has made a marked difference to the rates of progress now in the school.
- Very good relationships with staff and pupils underpin the positive attitudes seen in lessons and throughout the school. Pupils show respect for adults and are helpful and friendly to visitors, staff and their classmates.
- Pupils demonstrate great maturity in the way they move sensibly through the school, particularly on staircases and in corridors. They are proud to be a pupil at the school. They look after the school's equipment and ensure that their work is always done as neatly as possible.
- In recent years, leaders have invested considerably in developing the learning environment for pupils. The school is now modern, bright and airy. This, together with consistent approaches to behaviour management, has embedded a feeling of togetherness right across the school.
- The school is a very happy and respectful place; pupils want to come every day, with many travelling some distance to attend. Therefore, attendance rates in all year groups are very high and above that seen nationally. Rates of persistence absence have declined markedly since the last inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' achievement has risen significantly since the last inspection. This is because of the improvements made in the quality of teaching in all year groups are being embedded successfully. Pupils now make good progress from their different starting points.
- Though the school's published results have not reflected the current progress now being seen during the inspection, the acceleration has been very clear and pupils are now on course to achieve well.
- Current pupils make good progress. The standard of their work in Years 2 and 6 is rising so that a higher proportion of pupils produce work that is at or above expectations. Inspection evidence matches the school's assessment information; this suggests that, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are on course to make better progress than that seen last year in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the result of improving teaching and learning over time.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of the way letters link to the sounds they make (phonics) because this early reading skill is taught well. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the Year 1 national screening check is now well above the national average. The school is also rightly focusing on increasing pupils' skills of inference and understanding of more complex texts.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading that enables all the pupils in each class to access an increasing range of diverse reading materials. Pupils' skills are improving and they speak confidently about the books they are currently reading.
- Pupils in all key stages 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 pay close attention to their learning. For instance, in a sequence of English lessons seen in Year 6, teachers captivated the interests of pupils so they could explain to each other the effects that modal verbs had on a piece of fictional writing.
- In all years, pupils' workbooks show a good coverage of the curriculum, with high standards typically expected by teachers. In particular, the presentation of work is a particular strength of the school and demonstrates a sense of pride. This is true of the foundation subjects as well as English and mathematics. Public areas in the school proudly display pupils' framed artwork that is of an excellent standard.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make very good progress, particularly in learning to read and to express themselves, because of the excellent quality of the 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 at least the same good progress as their classmates and in some years better. For current pupils, there is no discernible gap in attainment, and in some cases the historical gap is reversed.

- 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 now make because systems for improvement are thorough, consistent and extremely rigorous.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- When children join the school in the early years, their skills and knowledge are below those typical for their age. Thoughtful and very well-planned activities and support provided by staff help them make a rapid start to their learning and, as a result, they make outstanding progress.
- Children get off to an excellent start and are well prepared for Year 1 because of the strong relationships they form with the adults working with them. A focus on reading, writing and number that is embedded within a lively curriculum means that many learn to read very quickly. Children are encouraged to explore their environment and engage with one another at all times. 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 very well, with the teachers setting a friendly, fun but authoritative tone for the setting.
- Teaching in the Reception and Nursery classes is outstanding. Staff take into account children's interests. For example, children learning about number and writing in the role-play 'space station' used 'space word mats' to plan the journey they were taking.
- The early years staff have developed effective and close working partnerships with parents. Parents are welcomed into all the classes. Leaders operate an open-door policy, which is appreciated by the parents.
- Teachers make effective use of assessment information, which is compiled into 'learning journeys' books which are given to parents at the end of the Reception Year. These provide a very attractive, informative summary of progress made over the year as well as a much-valued keepsake. Parents also contribute to these books throughout the year. Teachers make excellent use of these assessments to keep a careful check on the progress children are making and use this information in their planning.
- The indoor classrooms are very spacious, well organised and beautifully resourced. All the rooms are complemented by an easily accessible outside space, which has been extensively refurbished since the last inspection. As a result, a beautiful learning environment offers a very inviting and lively learning space that is used in all weathers and throughout the year.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are outstanding and have made a significant difference to the provision. The early years leader has worked very effectively to create a rich, learning culture that places the needs of the children at its heart. Children want to do well and please their teachers by doing their very best work.

School details

Unique reference number	131141
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10002002

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leanne Tritton
Headteacher	Stephen Hall (executive headteacher) Stephen O'Brien (head of school)
Telephone number	020 7739 8591
Website	www.hoxtongarden.hackney.sch.uk
Email address	admin@hoxtongarden.hackney.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 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 Other White backgrounds and Black African heritages.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability supported through a special educational needs statement or education, health and care plan is above average. The proportion receiving special educational needs support is low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is about double the national average. This is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The executive headteacher and head of school took up their roles in September 2014 when the school formed a soft federation with Orchard Primary School and Southwold Primary School.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed samples of lessons in all year groups throughout the inspection, five of which were observed jointly with the executive headteacher or head of school.
- The inspection team heard some of the school's pupils read 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 pupils' progress, anonymised records of teachers' performance and records of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with pupils and teachers and spoke to parents. A meeting was held with four members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were obtained through the few responses to the online Parent View survey as well as 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
Lisa Farrow	Ofsted Inspector
Desmond Dunne	Ofsted Inspector

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