

Date Palm Primary School

56–60 Nelson Street, London E1 2DE

Inspection dates

6–8 March 2018

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	Adequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors work together effectively. As a result, the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection.
- The safeguarding of pupils is central to the work of the school. Support for pupils and their families is provided at the earliest opportunity. Work with external agencies is effective.
- The curriculum is well planned, varied, interesting and engages most pupils; it is enhanced with a range of enrichment activities.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Pupils socialise and play well together. Incidents of bullying are rare. The great majority of pupils behave well. They demonstrate respect for one another, staff and visitors.
- Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum in key stage 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities achieve well. This is because work is well matched to their specific needs.
- Children make good progress in the early years and benefit from a vibrant and supportive learning environment. However, the outdoor provision is not as strong as that indoors.
- Work is not consistently challenging for the most able pupils. As a result, some of these pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- Some pupils in key stage 1 are not making the same consistently good progress as other pupils in the school.
- Progress in writing is not consistently strong, particularly in key stage 1. This is because, at times, teachers do not correct pupils' misconceptions; and expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. In some classes, pupils do not take enough pride in the work in their books.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes in writing for all pupils, by:
 - strengthening teachers' skills in teaching writing and sharing good practice across the school
 - planning writing activities to meet the needs of all learners
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils in key stage 1 can achieve
 - ensuring consistently high expectations of presentation, handwriting and punctuation.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that work is suitably matched to the needs of the most able pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. As the school has continued to grow and develop, leaders have ensured that all necessary material changes have been properly approved.
- Leaders work effectively together as a team, while being clear about their individual roles. They are determined to implement new changes for the better.
- All pupils have access to a broad and well planned curriculum, which they enjoy. Pupils spoke positively about the variety of opportunities available to them through after-school activities. These include art and cooking, plus information and communications technology clubs.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Learning is evident through displays around school, talking to pupils and observing discussions that pupils have with one another. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders ensure that staff teach pupils about the importance of values, such as respect for others. Pupils show an understanding of people's differences, including those with protected characteristics. One pupil spoke for others when saying, 'Different people have different life choices and we have to respect that.'
- Staff have worked in partnership with the local authority to teach pupils about the dangers of radicalisation. As a consequence, pupils are able to give an articulate explanation of what extremism is and its impact on communities.
- Leaders rightly celebrate work done to enable pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to thrive. These pupils make good progress due to effective leadership and strong teaching. The school's analysis of pupils' needs is thorough. Staff have been well trained to ensure that these needs are fully met.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and said that their children are happy, progressing well and feel safe. Parents said that they are kept informed about how well their children are doing and that reports home contain an appropriate amount of detail.
- Leaders have not been fully effective in their checking of the quality of teaching. Consequently, some weaknesses in teaching, mainly in key stage 1, have not been tackled quickly enough.

Governance

- The governing body is well led. Governors are linked to specific aspects of the school's work, reflecting their individual interests. Link governor meetings lead to appropriate actions. Governors recognise the strengths of the school and areas for development. They understand that developing staff further will in turn continue to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Governors are well trained and work with governors from other schools to develop further their roles. This has enabled governors to fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

- Governors communicate routinely with staff and parents and use surveys to effectively inform their planning. They provide leaders with an appropriate level of challenge.
- Governors oversee the management of the headteacher's performance and have recently secured external support to help them with this.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Leaders are well informed and rightly show a determination to keep pupils safe.
- Leaders are persistent in ensuring that pupils and their families get the support they need from external services. Secure safeguarding systems lead to swift intervention for pupils and their families.
- Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school meet requirements. All staff are trained in safeguarding procedures and know how to support pupils who need help. Staff are vigilant and have a sound and up-to-date understanding of their legal obligations to report any concerns. The safeguarding policy reflects current statutory requirements and is made available to parents.
- Pupils use a local playground daily and an appropriate risk assessment is in place. Pupils said that the teacher checks every day to make sure there is nothing there that can hurt them. Pupils say that they feel safe and they know how to be safe, including on the internet. Parents said that they believe pupils to be safe in school.
- Governors regularly check that safeguarding in school is effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching overall is good and there are some particular strengths. In mathematics, for example, clear instructions and guidance help pupils to develop their understanding and deepen their learning.
- Classrooms have vibrant and purposeful displays, which support and celebrate pupils' learning.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve well and are successfully included in all learning activities. Teaching assistants support individuals and groups of pupils effectively. Additional sessions to support pupils who are identified as falling behind are productive. For example, in Year 6 pupils were given additional support because they had not understood a concept in a previous mathematics lesson.
- In Islamic studies, pupils are given texts appropriate to their level of understanding. This enables them to contribute appropriately and make good progress.
- Pupils learn well in a variety of subjects. The curriculum is engaging and there are subjects where pupils produce work of a high standard, including in art.
- Secure systems are in place for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Staff use it to identify gaps in pupils' learning that need to be rectified, and plan accordingly.

- Teaching is based on good curriculum plans for all subjects taught and meets the needs of the majority of pupils. However, sometimes teachers do not adapt plans sufficiently to meet the needs of the most able pupils. Often, when all pupils begin at the same starting points, pupils say that the work they are set is too easy. As a result, the most able pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- On occasion, teaching is weaker because of gaps in teachers' subject knowledge. In key stage 1, for example, the teaching of writing is insufficiently focused on the development of skills, and some mistakes and misconceptions go uncorrected.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' handwriting or presentation. In these classes, some pupils do not take pride in their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are confident, kind, polite and keen to learn.
- Planning for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is effective. Pupils have a good understanding of how to look after themselves, including their emotional health and well-being. They have a positive outlook on life. One pupil said, 'In life, if you are positive you will meet positive people.'
- Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to take responsibility. They understand how the election of school councillors involves a democratic process, with speech making and voting. They aspire to be members of the school council.
- Pupils take part in anti-bullying week and know how to deal with issues, should they arise. Pupils said that bullying simply does not happen.
- Pupils go to the park to play at lunchtime. They walk together sensibly and enjoy the well-structured games when they arrive.
- Pupils are aware of how to look after their health. They recognise the importance of healthy eating and exercise and the impact this will have on their weight. They also understand that treats can be eaten in moderation and look forward to bringing a small treat on a Friday.
- Pupils understand that there are differences between people and that they should be respectful of others.
- In some classes, pupils do not consistently take pride in their work. Their books are not well looked after because there is no expectation that they should be. Pupils knew that they should not draw on their books, but said this happens when they have finished the set work and they have nothing else to do.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Routines and procedures are well established, with clear expectations. As a result, pupils conduct themselves well at lunchtime, breaktimes and when moving around the building. Good behaviour was particularly evident at lunchtime when the pupils walked very sensibly to the local park.

- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in school and ensure that the behaviour policy is implemented effectively.
- Pupils attend well and arrive at school in good time. Attendance is in line with national figures. Pupils attend well because they like school and want to learn. Almost all parents said that their children enjoyed school.
- Most staff manage any inappropriate behaviour swiftly and effectively. On occasion, especially when pupils lose interest in their work, behaviour is not as positive, and sometimes this is not challenged by the teacher.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Overall, pupils make progress over time that is above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils also make good progress in other subjects across the curriculum and achieve standards appropriate for their age. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 is in line with or above national averages in reading, mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling. At the end of key stage 2, pupils are ready for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils read fluently and demonstrate a good understanding of the text. They use their knowledge of phonics to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Most pupils make good progress in mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils exceeding expected standards in mathematics is below national averages. This is because the most able pupils are not consistently challenged to achieve standards of which they are capable.
- The assessment of writing in some year groups is not consistently accurate. For instance, in key stage 1 pupils make stronger progress than recognised by the school, and thus are able to tackle more challenging work than is provided by teachers.
- Pupils do not make as much progress in key stage 1 as pupils typically do in key stage 2. This was reflected in the 2017 end-of-key-stage-1 assessments, with below average attainment in mathematics and writing.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well led, ensuring clear direction and consistency across Nursery and Reception classes. Leaders are very knowledgeable and rigorously ensure all statutory requirements are met.
- Leaders work regularly and effectively with external agencies. This means that, where a need is identified, children can be supported at the earliest opportunity.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development was significantly above national averages in 2017. The broad range of activities support the children to achieve the early learning goals.
- A positive learning environment engages and inspires children. As a result, they are focused on their learning and choose activities well. They work independently and demonstrate good levels of concentration.

- Children behave well. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly. Children respect adults and respond well to them. This is because positive working relationships have been established and children feel secure.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to make the children think. For example, while the children were making shapes with play dough, good questioning developed descriptive language.
- Work produced by the children shows good progress from their starting points. This was evident in the Nursery, for example, when children used their knowledge of phonics to support their writing.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective. Children are well cared for and safeguarding systems are secure. Daily risk assessments are completed to ensure that children are safe. Staff have a clear understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures and their roles in keeping children safe.
- Assessments are effective and shared with parents regularly. Parents said that they are well informed about how well their children are doing in school.
- The outdoor provision is not as effective as that offered to children indoors. Leaders agree that this is a point for development.

School details

Unique reference number	139221
DfE registration number	211/6005
Inspection number	10020729

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Number of part-time pupils	57
Proprietor	Date Palm Primary Limited
Chair	Kamrul Islam
Headteacher	Sharifa Khatun
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,650
Telephone number	0207 791 2800
Website	www.datepalprimary.co.uk
Email address	datepalprimary@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	17–19 September 2013

Information about this school

- Date Palm Primary School is a selective day school. The leadership team consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and the early years leader. The four directors are the proprietors and there are also five governors.
- The early years provision consists of one Reception class on the main site and a Nursery. All children attend the Reception class full time. On the other site there is a Nursery and provision for two-year-olds. There is one class in each of the year groups from Year 1 to Year 6.
- The majority of pupils are from Bangladeshi and Somali heritages.

- There are currently 17 pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Two of these have an education, health and care plan. In early years there are many children for whom English is an additional language.
- The school's previous inspection was a full standard inspection in September 2013, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be adequate.
- The school does not use alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 18 lessons. The majority of these were joint observations with leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and attitudes in classrooms, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.
- Individual pupils and different groups of pupils spoke with inspectors to discuss their learning and views of the school. Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their reading with them. The inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work across subjects and all year groups.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff and a range of leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, special educational needs, assessment and early years. Inspectors also met with four governors to discuss governance.
- The documents considered included the school's improvement plan, self-evaluation documentation, information about pupils' progress and attendance, risk assessments and safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's behaviour logs, first aid and medical logs.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 74 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and contributions from parents who contacted Ofsted directly. They also gathered the views of several parents during informal meetings at the school.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 18 staff in response to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Donna Chambers, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Neil Harvey

Ofsted Inspector

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