

St Mary's Hare Park School

South Drive, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex RM2 6HH

Inspection dates

5–7 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides good leadership. She is well supported by senior leaders in providing an environment in which pupils can thrive.
- Senior leaders are committed to making sure that pupils achieve well. They have made sure that all of the independent school standards are met.
- Staff are committed to putting children at the heart of all that they do.
- Teaching is good across the school so that by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, they achieve very well. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 is above the national average in writing.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. However, most-able pupils are not consistently challenged, so they do not always move on in their learning.
- The curriculum is rich and tailored to the majority of pupils' needs. Pupils study a wide range of subjects, which helps them to develop academically and personally. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well by leaders.
- Pupils are polite, courteous, respectful and articulate. They look out for each other and are fully involved in school life. They are prepared well for secondary school.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work in keeping their children safe and providing a good education.
- The early years provision, although good, does not sufficiently enable all children to make the progress of which they are capable in their personal, social and emotional development.

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 early years for children by:
 - identifying specific areas of learning where additional support is needed, for example in their personal, social and emotional development
 - building upon the good practice to ensure that children are encouraged to take risks in order to learn.
- Continue to improve provision for the most able pupils by using assessment information more effectively to ensure that all work is suitably matched to their needs.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders, including trustees, have made sure that all the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher is committed to a vision where all pupils succeed personally and academically. Her determination has enabled the school to maintain a strong reputation locally. As a result, the school is known as the 'small school with the big heart'. Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the school and so the school is oversubscribed.
- The headteacher is well supported by her senior leaders. Together, they give clear direction to the school. This secures high standards for pupils and prepares them well for the next stage in their education.
- Senior leaders have high expectations of themselves and others. They know what effective practice looks like and are determined to make sure that pupils fulfil their potential or 'go beyond'. They support middle leaders well.
- Assessment information is used to identify gaps in pupils' understanding so that these can be addressed at the earliest opportunity. This means that leaders provide additional support when required.
- All statutory requirements for the early years are met, although leaders know that there is more to do be done to secure better outcomes for the youngest children by the end of early years.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils study a wide range of subjects, which cover all of the independent school standards. The quality of music and drama is exceptional. Pupils learn key life skills. For example, Year 6 pupils have qualified in first aid. All pupils are taught how to speak with confidence in public. Specialist teachers in subjects such as music and sport are effective in developing pupils' skills.
- Extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' learning effectively. Opportunities before and after school enrich pupils' learning. Additional activities include martial arts, thinking skills and football. These engage pupils well.
- An annual holiday/summer club supports Year 5 pupils well in their preparation for the next stage in their education. A comprehensive pack of learning materials is provided to those pupils attending, so that they can keep their skills ticking over.
- The school's ethos and curriculum contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils speak confidently about British values and democracy. Elections to a range of school responsibilities reinforce these values. The school celebrates its diversity well. For example, pupils visit different places of worship, including mosques and synagogues.
- Pupils contribute significantly to the local and wider community. Many different charities have been supported, following initiatives from pupils. The school is partnered with a school in Uganda and a special school in the West Indies. This provides further opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures.

Governance

- Trustees share the vision and high expectations of senior leaders and are ambitious for pupils to do well. Trustees are informed about the school's performance through regular meetings. This enables them to have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
- Trustees work closely with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team to ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. They ensure that the school's finances are used well to support pupils' learning and safety. For example, money has been identified to install electronic gates at the entrances to the school to further improve safety.
- Trustees state that they keep a close check on leaders' work. Documentation shows a clear plan in place to ensure strong governance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is an appropriate safeguarding policy, which includes current government guidelines.
- There is a concerted effort by leaders and staff to ensure that pupils' safety and welfare are given the highest priority. Senior leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead and two deputies, are fully aware of local risks that could pose a threat to the safety of pupils.
- Leaders are knowledgeable about the specific needs of the community. They ensure that staff have regular training to enable them to spot any pupils at risk of potential harm. All concerns are reported to the appropriate authorities.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know how to be safe, including on the internet, through activities such as 'online safety day'. The school makes parents aware of the dangers of social media through meetings, leaflets and newsletters. Parents said that their children are safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour throughout the school. Evidence from books demonstrates the emphasis placed on good presentation. Teachers reinforce good learning and behaviour with the judicious use of praise. Teachers explain and show pupils what they are going to learn. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them so they achieve well. However, there are inconsistencies, so not all pupils achieve as well as they could.
- Teachers know pupils well and work hard to ensure that teaching meets their needs. Additional adults are deployed effectively, especially in key stage 2. They ask meaningful questions and move learning forward.
- Teachers are supported well in their professional development. For example, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has visited other schools and attended training about dyslexia. Teachers new to the school are provided with a full range of

information, which enables them quickly to adapt to the school's expectations.

- The use of specialist support, for example in music and physical education, enables pupils to develop skills which help them perform at a high standard. For example, the orchestra performs fluently, with accuracy and expression. Pupils read the musical manuscript well. In physical education, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils further develop their skills in cricket.
- Pupils are motivated to learn because teachers plan interesting lessons. For example, key stage 1 pupils are presented with messages in a bottle which has been found by the teacher. The teacher uses the messages well to develop pupils' creative writing. In Year 6, pupils use their research skills to find out about the experiences of evacuees in the Second World War so that they can write a letter home.
- The teaching of writing is effective and enables pupils to gain a deeper understanding of new skills. Good-quality texts support progress made. Pupils read regularly, enjoy reading and value the choice of books in the library. The teaching of phonics is effective and supports pupils' ability to write fluently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite, courteous, respectful and articulate. The positive and nurturing approach of the school builds pupils' self-esteem and confidence in many ways, while simultaneously enabling pupils to be kind and supportive to their friends. Pupils are keen to share their thoughts and are proud of their school.
- From an early age, pupils are given responsibilities. This includes acting as school councillors, ambassadors or buddies, which promotes the caring side of the school.
- In Year 5, pupils apply to become travel ambassadors, stating why they wish to take on the role and what they would do if chosen. This helps to improve pupils' understanding of road safety.
- The school is considered a 'family', and important messages about looking after one another are reinforced in activities such as assemblies. Pupils say that they enjoy school because 'the teachers know them well.' They know their views are valued.
- Pupils are highly motivated to learn. They want to do well. As they progress through the school, they become more independent.
- Pupils work together well. For example, during orchestra practice, pupils know that they have to listen carefully to one another and work together.
- Pupils make a major contribution to the school and the local and wider community. The school council is a significant partner in school improvement. For example, an extensive list of charities have been supported because of initiatives by the school council.
- Leaders are alert to any pupils who may feel under pressure to perform well, especially in the examinations for entry to secondary school. Their individual knowledge of pupils enables them to provide good support.
- Pupils feel safe. They know that teachers care for their well-being and will help if there

are problems.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils understand the high expectations of their behaviour. They know that this helps them to learn and do their best. Behaviour in all classes is exemplary. Pupils listen well and get on with their work. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils play sensibly in different zones. They act responsibly, demonstrating consideration for others.
- Pupils are very polite and respectful. They say that bullying does not exist in the school. There is no evidence of any bullying incidents or exclusions. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour in the school.
- The school has put in place very strong and effective systems for checking attendance. Attendance figures are well above the national averages because pupils 'want to be here'.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils in all key stages are working at least at age-related expectations. Many are working well above, especially in mathematics. There is an expectation that all pupils achieve at least at the expected level for their age, each year. Consequently, most pupils make good progress from their different starting points, especially in upper key stage 2.
- At the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in writing is above the national average. It is in line with the national average in mathematics.
- At the end of key stage 2, most pupils achieve well. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is well above average. In 2018, every Year 6 pupil achieved an award for communication and public speaking; 100% of the pupils were awarded distinctions. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills early. There is great emphasis on key features of grammar, so that pupils learn early how to use vocabulary and punctuation in the appropriate context. Inspectors heard some pupils read. They were fluent and confident, and read accurately and with the appropriate intonation. These pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of what they had read.
- Work in pupils' books reveals that progress across the school is not consistent. Pupils make strong progress, but this is not the case across all subjects. For example, in mathematics, most-able pupils are insufficiently challenged by simple calculations.
- Daily homework in English and mathematics effectively supports the school's efforts to strengthen progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter early years from high starting points. From 2015 to 2017, assessment at the end of early years showed children's achievement below what is broadly expected for their age. Current school assessments indicate that this will continue in 2018, in the

number of children achieving a good level of development.

- Senior leaders have made sure that all of the statutory requirements for the early years and the relevant independent school standards are met.
- Staff plan well for the range of children's needs and abilities. When necessary, additional support is provided for identified children. Opportunities are provided to build upon previous learning, and routines are secure to ensure that children are engaged.
- Both the indoor and outside areas are well resourced and provide a rich learning environment. The parent teacher association has raised significant funds over time to support this. This provision helps children to learn in a variety of ways and to develop their independence.
- Teachers provide a full range of activities to develop children's skills. They model language well and give children opportunities to improve their speaking skills. For example, one child was on the telephone speaking to her 'mummy and daddy'. Before having a snack, children are keen to tell you the importance of washing your hands so that you do not get germs and need to go to the doctor.
- Staff are very good in developing children's independence and self-confidence. They use questions effectively, but opportunities are sometimes missed to extend children's learning. For example, a Nursery child who could recognise the number nine was not asked to write the number or collect, for example, nine bricks.
- Children behave well. They feel safe, listen well, respond swiftly to teacher instruction and play cooperatively with each other in all activities. They demonstrate high levels of concentration and are confident children. For example, when playing in the 'café', one child asked the visitor for his order.
- Parents are kept closely informed about their child's progress. Staff form very good relationships with them so that there is a continual dialogue about their learning.
- Staff assess children's progress through observations and discussions about children's work. They celebrate success and provide opportunities for future learning. Overall, children in the early years achieve well and are ready to enter Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	102357
DfE registration number	311/6054
Inspection number	10048715

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	184
Number of part-time pupils	12 (in Nursery)
Proprietor	St Mary's Hare Park Trust
Chair	G Spencer
Headteacher	K Karwacinski
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,490
Telephone number	01708,761220
Website	www.stmarysharepark.co.uk
Email address	harepark@btconnect.com
Date of previous inspection	8–10 June 2015

Information about this school

- St Mary's Hare Park School is a Roman Catholic independent primary school for girls and boys. It has its origins in Hare Park School, which was established in smaller premises in the local area in 1926. The school moved to its present premises in 1935.
- The school is registered for children aged 2–11. There are currently 184 pupils on roll.
- The school has a big emphasis on ensuring that there are small classes with a large number of classroom assistants.
- The school's last full inspection took place in June 2015, when the school's overall effectiveness was found to be outstanding. All of the independent school standards were met. Provision for early years was judged to be outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and attended an assembly. The majority of these observations were jointly undertaken with the assistant headteachers.
- 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 year groups.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff, the designated safeguarding lead and the lead for the early years. Inspectors met with the headteacher and the two assistant headteachers, and spoke with a trustee on the telephone.
- A broad range of documents were considered, including the school's improvement plan, self-evaluation documentation, information about pupils' progress and attendance, risk assessments and safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 28 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 38 staff in response to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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