

Inspection of a good school: Tower Bridge Primary School

Fair Street, London SE1 2AE

Inspection dates:

9–10 October 2019

Outcome

Tower Bridge Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and cared for because leaders prioritise their welfare. Staff help pupils understand different viewpoints and teach them how to resolve disagreements. Pupils know there is an adult they can go to for help when they need to. Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Bullying is unusual because staff deal with any unkind behaviour appropriately.

Leaders and staff care very much about pupils' academic success. They make sure that pupils' achievement is strong in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn as well as their peers. Staff make sure that these pupils are fully included and enjoy all aspects of school life.

Leaders make the most of the school's location to support pupils' learning. For instance, during their study of the Second World War, pupils find out about how parts of London were damaged during the Blitz.

Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons. They ask questions and share their ideas. Teachers help pupils to keep going if they find work hard or make a mistake. Pupils attempt tasks confidently and ask for help if they need it.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils achieve well here. Leaders and staff are clear about what pupils should be taught in each subject. They understand what pupils need to know for their future success. Teachers introduce ideas and content in a logical order. This helps pupils to grasp new concepts quickly and securely.

Leaders continually review subject plans. They know what is working well. When subject plans need to be improved, leaders respond well. They are putting new plans for design and technology in place to make sure that teaching in this subject is ambitious.

Pupils learn to read well. In the early years, staff are well trained to teach early reading. They choose activities and resources carefully to develop all children's knowledge of phonics. They also make sure that children become confident in using this knowledge when they begin to write. For instance, children practise making the shapes of letters as they learn to say them.

Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. In lessons, teachers make sure that pupils read a wide range of books and authors. They choose texts to develop pupils' understanding of the wider world. During 'Black History Month', pupils enjoyed reading about the athlete Dina Asher-Smith. Teachers also encourage pupils to read books that appeal to their interests. This motivates pupils to read regularly and further develops their reading ability. Teachers keep a close eye on how often individual pupils read at home. However, pupils sometimes choose books that are not well matched to their reading ability. This means pupils are unable to practise what they have been taught in school.

In history, teachers plan lessons to build on what pupils already know. For instance, in Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about the concept of 'invasion' when they study the Vikings and the Normans. In Year 6, pupils then use this knowledge when they study the causes and effects of the Second World War.

In mathematics, teachers also sequence activities carefully. This helps pupils make links between what they already know and the new concepts that they learn. Younger pupils use their knowledge of counting to help them answer more formal questions.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. The school's inclusive culture reflects this. As soon as children join the early years, leaders work closely with families to understand and meet their children's needs. Families of pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well so they can help their children better.

Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is calm and sensible. In lessons, staff make sure that pupils listen carefully and follow instructions. Pupils focus on the tasks that teachers set, and rarely distract others. This helps them achieve well.

Staff well-being is a priority for leaders. They encourage teachers to develop subject plans with colleagues from other federation schools. Teachers told me how this has helped to reduce their workload. Teachers also value highly the support they receive to strengthen their teaching expertise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that safeguarding is their number one priority. Adults understand how to report concerns. When appropriate, referrals are made to external agencies and followed up in a timely way. Regular training means that staff are alert to signs that a pupil's welfare is at risk. All necessary checks are made on adults working at the school.

Pupils told me that they feel safe at the school. They have regular drills to make sure they know what to do in the event of an emergency. Pupils learn about staying safe in the wider world, including keeping safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff are well trained to teach phonics and early reading. Reading work in class is carefully planned. However, pupils do not always choose books to take home that match their reading abilities. Leaders should ensure that pupils always choose books that are suitable and at an appropriate level of difficulty.
- Leaders are ambitious for what pupils should learn. They know that pupils could do better in design and technology. Leaders should ensure that the new plans for design and technology lead to improved learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Tower Bridge Primary School to be good on 27–28 January 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil

premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100813
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10110455
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Katie Garman
Headteacher	Ms Katherine Wooder (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.thebridgesfederation.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. There is one class in each year group, including the Reception Year.
- The school is part of a federation with Snowsfields Primary School. Both schools have the same executive headteacher and share a governing body.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the executive headteacher, senior leaders and staff. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of governors and I met with a governor.
- I considered reading, mathematics, history, and design and technology in detail. For each of these subjects, I held discussions with senior leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils, and looked at pupils' work.
- I spoke to pupils, parents and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. I also considered safeguarding records and documentation, along with the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.

Inspection team

Jason Hughes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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