

# Inspection of a good school: Eleanor Smith School

Flanders Road, East Ham, London E6 6FE

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Inspection dates:

30–31 October 2019

## **Outcome**

Eleanor Smith School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Staff care greatly about the pupils at this school. They want pupils to get the most from their education. This creates a positive atmosphere. Pupils enjoy coming to school because staff work hard to develop pupils' sense of worth. One parent told us, 'Pupils feel included and accepted, no matter how they are feeling.' This view was shared by other parents and carers we spoke to.

In classrooms, pupils behave well. Staff understand pupils' social and emotional needs. When pupils feel anxious, staff help them to manage their emotions and focus on their work. Pupils value this help. Parents, too, appreciate the specialist support the school offers their children. However, leaders and staff do not have high enough expectations for pupils' achievement. Across a range of subjects, teaching does not enable pupils to develop important knowledge. Pupils are capable of more.

Primary-aged and secondary-aged pupils have recently moved to a new shared site. Some pupils have found this unsettling, particularly younger pupils. In response, leaders have made changes to how pupils use the building. These changes have helped to reassure pupils and keep them safe. Staff do not accept bullying. If it happens, they do everything they can to stop it.

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

Leaders and governors know the school well. They are aware of its strengths and weaknesses. They work hard to create a school where pupils get the support they need to develop socially and emotionally. All staff are trained to communicate in a way that helps pupils to express their views and feelings. Everyone supports pupils to manage their emotions in a consistent way. As a result, pupils understand that staff are there to help them. In classrooms, pupils focus on their work because staff manage low-level disruption consistently and fairly.

Leaders are introducing new plans for what pupils should learn in each subject and when they should learn it. This is so that all subjects are planned and taught equally well. Currently, this is not the case in subjects such as personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and mathematics. For instance, mathematics planning for secondary-aged pupils provides too little information on what concepts teachers should teach and in what order. This means that some teaching does not build well on what pupils already know, understand and can do. Sometimes, pupils complete tasks that do not develop their thinking or deepen their knowledge. This is particularly the case for secondary-aged pupils. Leaders have not done enough to develop the subject knowledge of staff so that they teach all subjects well.

However, there are positive aspects of the quality of education. In some subjects, teachers know exactly what they expect pupils to know and understand. Teachers help pupils to build up their skills and knowledge gradually. This is the case in primary mathematics, where work is carefully adapted for all pupils.

Subject plans for English have a strong focus on reading. This is because leaders and staff recognise that reading is the foundation for learning. Due to this, pupils become confident and fluent readers who are willing to read out loud, including in front of their friends. Primary-aged pupils regularly take books home. Teachers encourage pupils to choose books that interest them. However, sometimes, pupils read books that do not match their abilities.

Leaders want pupils to excel beyond their lessons. Pupils are given a wide choice of activities. For example, they take part in mindful meditation and work experience, and have access to a range of support groups.

Far fewer pupils were excluded for poor behaviour last year than previously. The school's provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs is innovative and successful. The 'good to go' activities that start every day settle pupils well and prepare them for the day. Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their regular attendance. Leaders support families well with this.

Staff told us that leaders listen to them and think about their workload when making decisions. Most staff enjoy working at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. They are well trained to spot the signs of pupils who may be at risk. Staff pass on their concerns quickly to the right people. Staff with expertise in supporting pupils' emotional needs are always on hand. Pupils know they can share any worries that they have with trusted adults.

Staff have good partnerships with parents and other agencies. This helps them to make sure that pupils get the support they need.

The majority of pupils feel safe in school. They learn how to stay safe in a range of contexts. For example, they learn how to stay safe online and how to avoid potentially unsafe situations.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders are introducing new subject plans with the aim of raising expectations of what pupils know and can do. Leaders need to make sure that plans set out clearly what they expect pupils to learn and when they should learn it by. They should make sure that these plans are adapted to pupils' needs. Senior leaders should also develop the skills and knowledge of subject leaders and ensure that these leaders check that all subjects are planned and taught well.
- Some teaching does not help pupils to learn as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff are well trained and have the expertise to teach subject content in a way that meets pupils' needs.
- Leaders and staff make reading a priority. They ensure that pupils read regularly and develop positive attitudes to reading. However, leaders and staff should ensure that pupils read books that are well matched to their abilities.

## **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 the predecessor school, Eleanor Smith School, to be good on 23–25 April 2015.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143275
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110409
<b>Type of school</b>	Special school
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	67
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Daniel Robinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clinton Pascoe (executive principal)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://eleanorsmith.newham.sch.uk/">eleanorsmith.newham.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This school is part of the EKO Trust. It joined the trust on 1 November 2016.
- The school has recently combined the primary and secondary departments within a new single building on Flanders Road, East Ham.
- The school is in the process of changing its name from Eleanor Smith School to EKO Pathways School.
- All pupils who join the school have an education, health and care plan. The school caters specifically for pupils with complex social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high.

## Information about this inspection

- We met with a range of senior staff during the inspection, including the executive principal, the senior leadership team, members of the trust and members of the local governing body.
- We evaluated the quality of education at the school by looking at four main areas. These were reading, communication, mathematics and PSHE education. We met with a range of staff, pupils and leaders, as well as making visits to lessons, looking at pupils'

work and listening to pupils read.

- We took account of the 15 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.
- We gathered the views of parents by talking to one parent on the telephone, meeting with a group of seven parents and considering the responses from the three parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View.
- We looked at a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans, records of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents. We also evaluated information relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- We carried out a range of activities to look at safeguarding. These activities included meeting leaders, talking to staff, parents and pupils, and reviewing a range of school documents and records.

### **Inspection team**

Francis Gonzalez, lead inspector

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