

Inspection of a good school: West Ham Church Primary School

Portway, Stratford, London E15 3QG

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 May 2021

Outcome

West Ham Church Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are determined to live up to the high expectations that teachers and leaders have for their learning.

Pupils take care of one another. Their attitudes reflect the school's values of harmony and compassion. Everyone treats one another with great respect. Pupils are included whatever their needs or circumstances.

Pupils said that poor behaviour rarely stands in the way of their learning. When it does, teachers are effective at getting pupils back on track. Pupils said that bullying, including cyber bullying, sometimes occurs. However, they are well informed about how to get help if they are a victim. They are also confident that staff deal with bullying fairly and promptly.

Pupils said they feel safe. They continue to enjoy taking up responsibilities in class even though they currently cannot mix freely across the whole school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have been well supported to understand the changes needed due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Leaders and governors have extended the range of outdoor areas available to the early years children. Pupils love taking part in activities in the on-site woodland areas. They participate in opportunities to help them develop their appreciation of the arts and understanding of global issues.

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

The curriculum is well planned. It has been systematically developed since January 2020, when the current headteacher took up her post. All subjects were taught through remote education during the COVID-19 national lockdowns. Teachers are now adapting the content and sequence of lessons to help pupils fill gaps in their knowledge due to the pandemic. A rigorous programme, with specific timescales, is helping pupils to catch up.

Leaders and teachers know what they want pupils to learn and remember. Pupils build on their previous learning systematically. For example, in science, Year 6 pupils remember what they previously learned about forces from studying magnets in Year 4. They now apply this knowledge to their current studies of forces, such as air resistance.

Teachers ask pupils lots of questions in lessons. However, sometimes, these questions are not as useful as they could be in finding out how much pupils have learned or remembered. Occasionally, the activities and resources teachers select stand in the way of them picking up on pupils' misunderstanding.

Sometimes, subject leaders do not have a full understanding about how well the curriculum is taught in different classes. This includes identifying variations in teachers' subject knowledge. In some cases, this is due to recent changes in leadership roles. In others, it is due to restrictions posed by the pandemic.

The teaching of early reading is well planned. Phonics is taught skilfully as a result of the priority leaders have placed on staff training. Children in the early years practise their letters and sounds in activities throughout the day after their phonics lesson. Pupils read books which match their abilities. Teachers know which pupils are not as far on with their reading skills as a result of the national lockdowns. They are helping these pupils with the support they need to catch up.

A strong investment has been made in sourcing a wider range of books for pupils to read. The new school library is enjoyed by pupils, who also lend a hand in its running. Pupils enjoy the stories that teachers read to them.

Pupils said they really enjoy mathematics lessons. Their work shows that they remember important knowledge and mathematical vocabulary. Children in the early years are given strong support to move from representing numbers as pictures to using symbols. Teachers guide pupils well to decide how to tackle mathematical problems.

Pupils are aware of global issues such as sea pollution through activities such as the sea turtle project. A strong emphasis is placed on helping pupils to gain an appreciation of the visual arts. Leaders set up opportunities to help pupils realise how far their ambitions and talents can take them.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They value the way teachers acknowledge and praise good behaviour. Children in the early years know how to share equipment and take turns. Pupils and staff are confident that bullying among pupils is tackled well when it occurs. Pupils value the availability of 'worry boxes' to raise concerns.

Pupils with SEND have access to the whole curriculum. As a result, they enjoy equal opportunities to achieve well. Teachers receive expert training in teaching and including pupils with specific needs.

Teachers said that they feel well supported by leaders in managing their workload. They also feel that they have been well supported and listened to throughout the recent

challenging circumstances of the pandemic. Teachers appreciate the extent to which they are consulted and involved in any changes that leaders decide to make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Strong relationships with parents and carers help leaders to identify and deal with concerns promptly. Leaders and governors know about different types of risks, including those which have become more prominent as a result of COVID-19. They use this knowledge to plan opportunities in the curriculum that aim to build pupils' resilience.

Leaders have introduced an electronic system of keeping safeguarding records. It is enabling staff to improve the culture of reporting and organise information better for when external help is required.

Pupils remember important learning about protecting their identity and avoiding misleading links when using the internet. They also understand how to stay safe when using public transport.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers regularly ask searching questions of pupils. However, sometimes, these questions are not as effective as they could be in checking the key knowledge that pupils should have learned. Furthermore, classroom work is sometimes built around activities which, while interesting, do not always make clear what knowledge is to be learned. This causes confusion for pupils and makes it more difficult for teachers to assess what pupils have learned. Leaders should prioritise helping teachers to improve how they check pupils' learning and their decisions about lesson content.
- The curriculum is well planned and organised. However, there are some gaps in what leaders know about teachers' subject-specific knowledge and the way they put the curriculum into practice. Leaders should continue to gather all the information they need to ensure that teachers are implementing the curriculum in precisely the way that leaders intend.

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 or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 school to be good on 6 and 7 July 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 information from Parent View 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 the school and 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 [here](#).

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	102765
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10192545
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	304
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephen Ball
Headteacher	Nicola James
Website	www.westham.newham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- West Ham Church Primary school is a larger-than-average primary school. It is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school in the Diocese of Chelmsford.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2020.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and science. These deep dives included visits to lessons, discussions with leaders, teachers and pupils, and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- I reviewed the school's records of checks on the suitability of staff, along with other documents related to safeguarding and behaviour.

- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. I also spoke to pupils about their school experiences and the wider opportunities on offer at the school.
- I met virtually with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, and the school's diocesan adviser.
- I also met with the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, and the family liaison leader.
- I considered 12 written responses from parents to the online survey and 34 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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