

# Inspection of a good school: Linton Mead Primary School

Central Way, Thamesmead, London SE28 8DT

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Inspection dates:

29 and 30 September 2021

## Outcome

There has been no change to Linton Mead Primary School's overall effectiveness judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection.

However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a warm and welcoming community where staff value and listen to pupils' views. Pupils like coming to school. They are kind and respectful to one another and to the adults who work here. Pupils said they feel safe and know someone they can share any worries or concerns with.

Pupils said that if they report incidents of bullying, it is always dealt with. This makes them feel confident and secure during the school day. There is a lively, friendly atmosphere at breaktimes and lunchtime. Pupils have access to lots of games and activities. They are courteous and polite to adults.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, most lessons are calm and orderly. Some low-level disruption, such as calling out, occurs when some of the younger pupils struggle to manage their feelings. Staff are sensitive to pupils' individual needs, and they support them well.

Leaders want pupils to learn successfully. However, pupils do not get off to a strong start in learning to read. Sometimes, this holds back pupils' learning in other subjects. Parents and carers are positive about the way staff care for their children. Parents praised teachers' kindness in supporting their children during challenging times. Leaders provide strong pastoral care for the school community.

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

Leaders want pupils to achieve well in all subjects. They have improved the way some subjects are planned and taught.

However, leaders have not made the teaching of early reading and phonics their key priority. The phonics programme is not sufficiently well structured and systematic. In addition, sometimes staff do not follow the programme in a consistent and rigorous manner. As a result, some pupils find learning to read difficult. This is because the phonics programme does not build up their ability to decode accurately and with fluency. In some cases, this affects pupils' wider learning as they find it hard to read the resources they are given in other subjects.

Leaders' assessment of pupils' reading does not swiftly identify those who are falling behind. Provision to help pupils catch up is not focused on pupils' needs. Reading books are not always closely matched to pupils' phonics knowledge. Training to develop staff's expertise in teaching reading has not brought about the necessary improvements.

Leaders aim to foster a love of reading and literature across the school. For instance, they have invested in a well-resourced school library. In Year 6, pupils like to read widely. However, weaknesses in early reading mean that some pupils continue to find it hard to read fluently and with understanding.

Leaders are ambitious to provide a creative and challenging curriculum. This matches the scope and content of the national curriculum. Leaders have improved the curriculum in subjects such as mathematics and modern foreign languages (MFL). They are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Plans are structured to make sure that pupils build their knowledge and practise what they have learned. In mathematics, for example, this supports pupils to learn to calculate with fluency and accuracy. Similarly, in MFL pupils achieve well because they have opportunity to continually practise and apply their language skills. Lessons are calm and all pupils are well supported in speaking and listening.

Curriculum plans in science set out the order in which pupils should be taught key concepts. Pupils said how much they enjoyed doing experiments and investigations. However, teaching of the curriculum does not focus well on deepening pupils' knowledge of key scientific ideas, including through practical work. Pupils' use and understanding of key vocabulary are underdeveloped. Assessment does not routinely help teachers to identify what pupils have learned. Leaders are currently reviewing how they check pupils' learning.

From the early years, leaders make sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported. Pupils receive the help they need from well-trained staff. Leaders make sure that all pupils with SEND get strong pastoral support.

Children in early years are happy and well cared for in a nurturing environment. The curriculum is planned so that all aspects of early learning are considered.

Pupils' wider development is planned for carefully, including in the early years. This is a clear priority for all staff. Pupils enjoy taking part in clubs and extra-curricular activities.

Leaders put some of this provision on hold during the pandemic. They hope to resume these activities later this term.

Governors know what the school needs to do to improve further. Staff feel well supported. They value leaders' actions to support their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The members of the safeguarding team are vigilant about following up any concerns about pupils' safety. They are well known to pupils and parents. Relevant training for staff in keeping pupils safe is all up to date. They know how to report concerns they have about pupils' welfare. Senior leaders and governors have had training in safer recruitment.

Staff are aware of the particular safeguarding risks to pupils in their local area. When necessary, members of the safeguarding team do home visits to ensure pupils' well-being and welfare. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about online safety as part of the computing curriculum.

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

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

- Some pupils do not learn to read quickly. Leaders need to prioritise early reading. They need to introduce a structured and systematic phonics programme. Leaders must provide further training and support for staff so that all phonics teaching follows the programme consistently. Leaders must also check that the books weaker readers are provided with match the letters and sounds they are learning.
- Leaders have well-designed plans for how science should be taught in school. The knowledge covered matches the content of the national curriculum. However, leaders need to ensure that the planned science curriculum is implemented consistently well. This includes ensuring that pupils develop their vocabulary as well as their skills in practical science. Leaders need to design an assessment system to ensure that teachers understand what has been learned and where pupils' gaps are.

## **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, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 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 Ofsted 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.

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>	100159
<b>Local authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199965
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	340
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Rachel Sewell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Critchell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lintonmead.org.uk">www.lintonmead.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Linton Mead is a two-form entry primary school.
- The school has early years provision for Nursery and Reception children.
- The school has a resourced provision for supporting pupils with autism spectrum disorder and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

## Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair, and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector did deep dives in the following subjects during this inspection: reading, science and MFL. The inspector also looked at mathematics. He heard a wide range of pupils read. The inspector visited lessons, reviewed work, and spoke with pupils about their learning, and met with subject leaders and teachers.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through conversations with the inspector and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.
- The inspector also considered safeguarding records, documentation and the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.

### **Inspection team**

Sean Flood, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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