

Inspection of a good school: Elfrida Primary School

Elfrida Crescent, Bellingham, London SE6 3EN

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 June 2022

Outcome

Elfrida Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well looked after in this school. They feel happy and safe. Pupils said that if they need help, or if they have any worries, there is always someone to go to. Staff work hard to support pupils and families. They know them very well.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have high expectations of them. Staff make sure that pupils achieve well. Pupils are prepared effectively for the next stage in their education.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful towards adults. They look after each other and they take care of their school environment. They use equipment, in and out of lessons, with great care. In rare instances when bullying occurs, staff deal with it promptly and effectively.

Leaders create meaningful wider experiences for pupils in addition to their academic studies. For example, pupils have had many opportunities to spark their creative development. They have worked with a philharmonic orchestra, local and national art organisations, and with African drummers, for example. Pupils recalled with enthusiasm their many trips to museums and galleries as well as their residential journeys to adventure centres.

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

Leaders prioritise early reading. They are always seeking ways to improve how they teach pupils to read. Leaders recently trained all staff in delivering a new phonics programme. As a result of this training, staff implement the phonics programme consistently across the school. Staff use a wide range of strategies which help pupils to remember what they have learned in phonics.

Leaders have used assessments to identify pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge due to the COVID-19 disruptions. These pupils receive extra phonics sessions to catch up. Their phonics knowledge is improving rapidly.

Pupils receive lots of opportunities to practise and consolidate the phonics they have learned previously. In the early years, staff revisit phonics throughout the day. Older pupils read to adults often. However, occasionally, some pupils receive books which are too hard for them to read. In the few instances when this happens, pupils' reading fluency is affected.

Leaders have put in place an ambitious curriculum. It is well sequenced and clearly identifies the end points that leaders want pupils to achieve. It considers how pupils develop an early understanding of different subjects. For example, in mathematics, children in the Nursery, including the two-year-olds, develop an understanding of numbers. Staff support them, for instance, in counting small sets of objects found in the learning environment. This learning is built upon as pupils move through early years and into Year 1 and beyond. Throughout the school, pupils engage with learning positively. Disruptions due to poor behaviour are rare.

In most subjects, teachers consider the knowledge pupils need to have mastered to be successful with their learning. For example, in design and technology, pupils in Year 6 successfully made their own pairs of slippers. Before making them, teachers ensured that pupils had mastered important elements of designing and constructing. They knew how to choose correct materials, how to prepare templates for their design, and different sewing techniques. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not routinely emphasise the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This affects how well pupils know and remember the most important subject content.

Leaders use assessment effectively to identify gaps in pupils' learning. For example, in mathematics, leaders identified weaknesses in pupils' arithmetic fluency. They addressed this with urgency. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are strengthening their mathematical fluency. Leaders and staff also use assessment information to identify pupils who might need more support. Staff work with leaders to ensure that pupils' needs are identified and met, including those with SEND.

Staff provide a range of opportunities to support pupils' social and moral development. Pupils experience democracy, for example, when they elect their school council representatives. These young leaders take their responsibilities seriously. They make themselves available during playtimes for pupils who want to speak to them.

Staff said that they love coming to work. Most of them have worked at this school for a long time. They appreciate leaders' efforts to ensure that staff workload remains suitable. They said that processes such as assessments and marking are reviewed frequently to check that they remain manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that pupils are safe at school. They understand the needs of their pupils and families, and they identify those who might be at risk at the earliest opportunity. They work with external agencies to secure the best outcomes for pupils' safety and welfare.

Leaders' checks on the suitability of staff are rigorous. Staff receive training to keep up to date with relevant safeguarding issues. For example, staff have recently received training on the issues of domestic violence and knife crime.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school, at home, and when online. Through the curriculum, they learn about e-safety, and healthy relationships, among other topics.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teachers give books to pupils which are too hard for them to read. In these instances, pupils exert lots of effort sounding out every phoneme and this hampers their fluency. Leaders need to make sure that teachers give pupils books which they can read fluently and confidently.
- Leaders have planned a well-sequenced and coherent curriculum in all subjects. However, sometimes, and in a few subjects, teachers do not emphasise the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This affects pupils' learning and results in pupils not knowing or remembering important subject content. Leaders need to ensure that in these subjects, pupils learn the essential content and build their knowledge securely over time.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2012.

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

Unique reference number	100681
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10212502
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	424
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governing Body	Cathy Ruiz
Headteacher	Kathryn Wong (executive headteacher) Elizabeth Newton (head of school)
Website	www.elfridaprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school offers a provision for two-year-old children.
- Leaders do not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the executive headteacher, the head of school, and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art and mathematics. For each deep dive, he spoke with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.

- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector carried out a scrutiny of the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and reviewed other documentation.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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