

Inspection of Fircroft Primary School

Fircroft Road, Tooting Bec, London SW17 7PP

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are safe and happy at this school. Pupils, and parents and carers, spoke about the school's 'family feel'. Leaders make sure that everyone is included and valued for who they are.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They study a range of subjects. However, not all subjects are planned carefully. This stops pupils from building their knowledge securely. Leaders are in the process of improving this. In the early years, adults lack the expertise to deliver the planned curriculum consistently well.

The school has many exciting opportunities for pupils. For instance, pupils get to take part in productions and represent the school at musical events. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the importance of caring for others and the environment. They enjoy discussing and challenging stereotypes in various assemblies and workshops.

Staff do not tolerate bullying, and it rarely happens. Pupils know that if bullying does occur then staff sort things out quickly. Pupils show respect for each other and adults. They behave well in lessons and around the school. However, adults' expectations for children's behaviour in the early years are not high. This means that children's learning in Reception is often disrupted.

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

The curriculum in most subjects is not fully developed. In these subjects, leaders have not identified precisely what pupils should learn and when. Many subject leaders are new to their roles and much curriculum thinking is at an early stage of development.

Generally, leaders have not ensured that subject leaders and staff receive subject-specific training. This leads to inconsistencies in how well some subjects are taught. Systems to check pupils' learning are not well established. As a result, assessment in many subjects is not used routinely to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils struggle to recall what they have learned. In the early years, staff's training has not been effective. As a result, adults do not have the expertise to successfully implement the curriculum. This affects children's learning overall.

In a few subjects, including English and mathematics, leaders have considered carefully what pupils learn and in what order. Staff in these subjects have more opportunities to develop their subject knowledge than in other areas. Learning is carefully sequenced to help pupils to develop their knowledge securely. In mathematics, for example, pupils in Year 5 built on and used their arithmetic and reasoning strategies consistently. In music, pupils in Year 2 used their previous learning to sing confidently with appropriate pitch and tempo.

Leaders' approach to early reading is a strength. Staff deliver the school's phonics programme consistently. This helps pupils to read with increasing fluency. Children in the early years begin to use phonics to decode and blend words. However, in Reception, children who struggle with reading do not catch up quickly because adults do not manage behaviour well.

Leaders understand pupils' individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive personalised support. Adults are skilled at helping pupils with SEND with their learning. Leaders work closely with external therapists and specialists to consider how best to support pupils' needs.

Pupils are keen to learn. They pay attention in class. Staff have high expectations, which pupils respond to. However, in Reception, adults' expectations are less ambitious. Children in the early years do not learn to follow practices and instructions routinely.

Staff provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to learn about themselves and others. They promote pupils' physical and emotional health well. Leaders encourage pupils' awareness of different cultures and the importance of healthy relationships. Pupils enjoy the many extra-curricular clubs on offer and like to take part in sporting competitions. Staff encourage pupils to take on responsibilities, for instance as eco-councillors and wider school representatives.

The school has experienced financial and staffing instability over recent years. Members of the governing body and leaders have made some improvements. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve further, particularly the quality of education.

Although some staff raised concerns about changes to staffing over the last few years, staff are typically happy to work at the school. They feel well supported and said that leaders are approachable and supportive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear oversight of safeguarding procedures. They work with a range of professionals to help vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to understand and follow the school's safeguarding procedures. They help staff to deepen their understanding of different safeguarding issues. For example, staff know how to deal with various safeguarding scenarios, including child exploitation. Staff follow up on any concerns that may arise.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe. They are encouraged to be aware of potential risks when using the internet and the significance of consent in an age-appropriate way.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum thinking in most foundation subjects, including in early years, is not ambitious. In these subjects, leaders have not considered carefully the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember, and when it should be taught. Pupils do not build up secure knowledge in these subjects as a result. Leaders should continue with their work to develop and embed new curriculum plans and approaches in the foundation subjects.
- Staff have varying levels of subject knowledge and confidence. This leads to inconsistencies in how well staff implement the curriculum and assess pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure subject leaders and staff have subject-specific professional development to improve their expertise.
- In the early years, children do not behave well which disrupts their learning, including in reading. The intended curriculum in Reception is not implemented consistently well because adults' subject knowledge is not strong. Leaders must ensure all staff have professional development and support so that they can help children to learn effectively.

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	101007
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10228208
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tara Coffin
Headteacher	Denise York
Website	www.fircroft.family
Date of previous inspection	26 April 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and senior leaders are new to the post. The chair and most members of the governing body are new to their roles.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and members of the governing body. The lead inspector held a remote conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: early reading, history, music and mathematics. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and

listened to pupils read. Meetings with pupils and teachers were held to gather their views.

- During the inspection, inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, pupils' personal development and behaviour. The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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