

# Inspection of a good school: Canonbury Primary School

Canonbury Road, London N1 2UT

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 October 2022

## Outcome

Canonbury Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school. Staff help pupils to achieve because they have high expectations. Pupils work hard to meet these expectations. They behave well because they want to learn. Pupils enjoy reading and learning about 'tricky words'. They value visits to the school's library, where they can borrow books to take home.

Pupils are safe at school. Bullying is dealt with effectively by staff should it occur. Pupils are taught to speak to their class teacher or any adult if they have concerns. Staff put pupils' well-being first. They encourage pupils to look after their physical and mental health.

Pupils have lots to look forward to here. Staff celebrate their achievements in reward assemblies each week. Every class has regular outings linked to the curriculum. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports. All pupils play the recorder and learn to play a brass instrument in Years 5 and 6. They celebrate events such as Black History Month. Teachers encourage pupils to share their presentations, including during assemblies.

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

Leaders prioritise reading. Pupils start learning phonics as soon as they have settled into Reception. Leaders ensure that the school's new phonics programme is used effectively. However, this is not fully embedded across the school. Teachers support pupils to spell new words with confidence. They are skilled at identifying pupils who may need extra help to catch up. Staff are well trained to help these pupils. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure. They love hearing their class teacher read to them each day. Pupils fondly remember the stories they have read.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is well planned and sequenced. It starts in the early years with the building blocks of knowledge and skills that children need. Leaders' curricular thinking in subjects builds in complexity as pupils get older. For example, in the

early years, pupils learn about their family and how it changes. Over time, they gain an understanding of historical chronology. Teachers revisit and consolidate key concepts regularly. In mathematics, pupils learn to count with confidence in Nursery. Teachers develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of number to solve difficult problems.

Typically, teachers check that pupils can recall what they have learned. They build on pupils' previous learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils often revisit their times tables. Teachers use songs and quizzes to help pupils remember more. In a small number of subjects, teachers do not check precisely what pupils have remembered.

Leaders provide well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their vocabulary. In the early years, pupils learn about the seasons. They use words with accuracy, such as 'hibernation' and 'pollination'. In their work on the Roman Empire, pupils in Year 4 learned about emperors and amphitheatres. This knowledge helped pupils to develop a deep and accurate understanding of historical time periods.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive positive support to develop their spoken language. Teachers and support staff work together to provide effective support for pupils with SEND. This includes the use of well-selected resources to help pupils' understanding. Staff regularly check the progress that these pupils make. Leaders work closely with external specialists to support the development of pupils' speech, language and emotional needs.

Pupils engage positively with their learning. Low-level disruption in class is rare. It does not prevent teachers from delivering the curriculum effectively.

Leaders carefully consider pupils' learning beyond the academic curriculum. The school encourages all pupils to take on responsibilities, such as school-council representatives. Teachers encourage pupils to learn about habits that make successful leaders as part of their assemblies. Pupils have many opportunities to experience the cultural highlights of London. For instance, they have visited zoos, Kew Gardens and the London Symphony Orchestra. Pupils look forward to residential journeys to Wales and Shropshire.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They felt well supported by leaders and by each other. Leaders support teachers to manage their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders oversee a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff have regular training and updates about the latest government guidance on safeguarding. As a result, they know the signs that suggest that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff know how to report any concerns about pupils' safety. Leaders build effective relationships with external agencies to help pupils and families. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. This includes online and in the community. Members of the governing body have a good understanding of their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

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

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

- The school has changed its programme for the teaching of phonics. Leaders ensure that the new scheme is being introduced effectively. Nevertheless, staff and pupils are still becoming familiar with how to teach and apply the routines consistently. Leaders should ensure that the phonics programme is firmly embedded throughout the school. This will help them to assess its impact on pupils' reading development over time.
- In a few foundation subjects, leaders do not ensure that staff check precisely what pupils have learned. This risks leading to misconceptions in pupils' understanding of these subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers in all subjects have the expertise to check what pupils know and remember and address any gaps in pupils' learning as they arise.

## 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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2011.

## 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.

## 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>	131773
<b>Local authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211108
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Henry Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patrick Mildren
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.canonburyprimaryschool.co.uk">www.canonburyprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She met with those responsible for governance. She met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector reviewed documentation related to safeguarding and looked at the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.

- The inspector met with members of staff. She met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Lisa Strong, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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