

Inspection of Sarah Bonnell School

Deanery Road, Stratford, London E15 4LP

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Sarah Bonnell School work hard and achieve well. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Lessons are engaging and delivered by teachers with very strong subject knowledge. This helps pupils to learn more and to remember more. Pupils are, therefore, very well prepared for the next steps in their education or training.

Leaders have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning, which they demonstrate through high rates of attendance at school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent and pupils are safe. The whole school community is proud of its diversity. Pupils are respectful towards each other and know that unkind or discriminatory language is not tolerated. Bullying is very rare and is dealt with effectively if it does happen.

Pupils take an active role in the life of the school beyond the classroom. They participate in many of the clubs and activities on offer, perform in assemblies, help to organise events and activities, and mentor younger pupils. School leaders listen to pupils and involve them in decision making. For example, recent Black History Month activities were designed and organised by pupils.

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

Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is carefully sequenced and expertly taught by skilled staff. This helps pupils to build up their knowledge of subjects in a logical way. Previous learning is regularly re-visited, so that pupils remember more. For example, in geography, key geographical skills such as map work, as well as more complex concepts such as globalisation, are revisited and built on each year.

Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding of the content taught. Steps are taken to address any gaps in understanding that are identified, so that pupils do not miss out on important subject content. Reading is prioritised across the school, including targeted help for those pupils who need more support with their reading.

The needs of pupils with SEND are well met. Teachers have detailed information about these pupils, and they make appropriate adjustments to lessons to ensure they can access the same curriculum as their peers. A very small number of pupils with more complex needs follow a specially designed curriculum, delivered expertly by highly trained staff.

In Year 9, pupils choose from a range of creative subjects. This means that they study two of these subjects in more depth but may no longer study art, music, or drama, for example. Therefore, pupils miss out on studying some creative subjects in depth. Some pupils would like the opportunity to continue with the breadth of the curriculum after Year 8.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils are courteous, respectful, and kind. Very positive relationships between pupils and staff, and very clear behaviour systems mean that lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour. Bullying is very rare and when it does happen pupils are confident that staff will deal with it effectively.

Leaders are rightly proud of the work that the school does to promote pupils' wider development. A carefully considered programme of personal, social and health education helps pupils learn important life skills, such as how to look after their own mental and physical well-being. Year 7 pupils value the 'Learning for Life' curriculum, which helps to support the transition from primary to secondary school. Pupils follow a sequenced programme of careers activities across all year groups. This includes individual interviews for older pupils. Vulnerable pupils and those with SEND receive additional careers support to help prepare them for their next steps beyond school.

A knowledgeable governing body is well placed to support and challenge school leaders. Governors and trustees share the same vision and high ambitions as leaders. Leaders prioritise staff professional development and well-being. Those teachers who are new to the profession are very well supported. Staff are proud to work in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A well-trained and experienced safeguarding team ensures that safeguarding is prioritised in the school. Leaders are tenacious in securing appropriate support to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.

Staff are vigilant and know to report any concerns. Staff receive relevant safeguarding training and updates and are aware of local safeguarding issues. Pupils feel safe at school, and they know who they can speak to in the school if they have any concerns.

Some processes to check on the well-being of pupils attending off-site alternative provision are not tight enough, for example the daily attendance of pupils is not routinely checked. During the inspection, leaders started taking steps to quickly address this.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not study the full range of foundation subjects in Year 9. Therefore, pupils who, for example, choose not to continue with music or art in Year 9 do not benefit from the same depth of curriculum as their peers who have chosen these subjects. This means that pupils miss out on opportunities to further

develop their knowledge in these areas. Leaders should put strategies in place to ensure that the Year 9 curriculum is as broad as possible, so that all pupils continue to develop their knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects.

- Leaders' systems for checking on the well-being of pupils who attend alternative provision are not as rigorous as they should be. This could put pupils at unnecessary risk. Leaders are aware of this and should ensure that the checking systems that they use are applied to all alternative education providers where pupils are placed.

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

Unique reference number	142644
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10246827
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive/
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1330
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Leslie
Headteacher	Rae Potter
Website	http://www.sarahbonnell.net
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Sarah Bonnell School converted to become an academy school in July 2018. When its predecessor school, also called Sarah Bonnell School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Newham Community Learning Trust.
- The school uses a small number of both registered and unregistered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils. Currently there are pupils attending Newham College, Education Links, The Boxing Academy and Caramel Rock.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 and above with information about approved education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, geography, modern foreign languages, and drama. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects and looked at pupils' work and curriculum documents.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and with members of staff, as well as a range of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- An inspector visited one of the alternative education providers used by the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for SEND, careers education, reading, behaviour and attendance, and pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body, and with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.

Inspection team

Bob Hamlyn, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Terry Millar	Ofsted Inspector
Guy Forbat	His Majesty's Inspector
Simon Conway	His Majesty's Inspector
Luke Stubbles	His Majesty's Inspector

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