

Inspection of Old Ford Primary - A Paradigm Academy

Wrights Road, Bow, London E3 5LD

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected

Ofsted has not previously inspected Old Ford Primary - A Paradigm Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Old Ford Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school enormously. They said that learning is 'fun' because they 'discover new things' and lessons make their brains 'work fast'. Leaders make sure that the broad curriculum gives pupils the knowledge and self-confidence to achieve exceptionally well. Pupils live the values of the school. They are encouraged to develop a strong sense of integrity, contribute fully to the school's community and to achieve excellence in all that they do.

All the staff are highly ambitious for their pupils. This extends to everything the school does, from developing pupils' knowledge of subjects to promoting high standards of behaviour. Pupils behave impeccably. They are extremely polite and courteous, respecting everyone equally. The school promotes pupils' well-being and safety very well. Pupils said that there is hardly any bullying and know that it will be dealt with fairly if it does happen. Staff resolve any issues effectively. Pupils are kept safe and feel safe.

Everyone's work to develop pupils' personal development is ingrained across the school. Leaders and staff do everything with purpose and conviction. This means that pupils receive a first-class education and that the importance of learning is reinforced at every opportunity. As a result, pupils do extremely well and are prepared successfully for the next stage of their lives.

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

High quality permeates this school. All that leaders and staff do is carefully considered, expertly delivered, and continually reviewed and improved. The thought that goes into developing the curriculum is of a high order. Excellent support from the Paradigm Trust helps a great deal. The work that leaders and staff do to put the plans into practice also makes a highly positive difference to the quality of the curriculum.

Key to the school's excellent provision is the way that leaders ensure that the small details are right. They focus on making sure that teachers are able to get on with the job of building pupils' subject knowledge. For example, pupils' extremely positive attitudes to school and learning mean that lessons are rarely, if ever, interrupted by silly behaviour. Classroom routines are particularly well established and pupils know what is expected.

Leaders' decisions are based on a strong understanding of how pupils learn. In all subjects, the curriculum is planned and taught effectively. For example, there is absolute clarity about the essential concepts to be taught in each subject, how these are to be taught and in what order. This ensures that the curriculum is planned logically and implemented consistently in classrooms. Pupils develop their knowledge and skills in a structured way, with each new fact building on previous learning.

Teachers check learning all the time and only move on to the next piece of work when they are sure that pupils know the basics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the same high-quality curriculum as everyone else. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified accurately. Where necessary, learning is adapted to meet these specific needs. Pupils who find school difficult are supported extremely well.

The curriculum is enhanced considerably by a wide range of outings, visiting speakers, clubs and after-school activities. For example, as part of their studies, pupils visit different places of worship, West End shows, music concerts and museums. After-school clubs are well attended. Leaders ensure that all pupils who wish to join a club are able to do so. A programme of assemblies adds considerably to the exceptional provision for pupils' personal development.

High quality and ambition are amply illustrated by the early years provision. In the Nursery, the curriculum is planned methodically. Activities are carefully considered and the strong emphasis on developing children's social and emotional skills goes hand in hand with fostering their early literacy and numeracy. Children's self-confidence and independence are developed very effectively. This ensures that when they move into Reception and Year 1, they are ready to learn.

Early reading is planned and taught extremely well. Starting in Nursery, children are helped to recognise the sounds that letters make. This is built on effectively in Reception, and in Years 1 and 2, so that pupils become fluent readers. They read books that are matched closely to the sounds that they are learning. Pupils read increasingly complex books as they get older and are able to correct themselves when they make a mistake. For example, pupils like reading to each other in pairs and helping their friends when they make a mistake.

Leaders ensure that staff receive a wide range of ongoing training to keep them up to date with current thinking. This adds considerably to the excellent education pupils receive. Leaders ensure that teachers' workload is manageable and that staff well-being is a priority. The trust directors exercise their responsibilities thoroughly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and the trust's directors make sure that safeguarding is a priority. Record-keeping is detailed and up to date. Staff are well trained to recognise the range of potential risks to which pupils may be exposed. They know how to refer their concerns to leaders.

There are strong systems to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive support in a timely manner. Regular and frequent meetings between staff and the trust's mental health experts ensure that the ongoing needs of pupils are continually checked. Action to provide help is swift. Staff have considerable knowledge of their pupils and how to

access external support services. The strong links with the local authority mean that leaders can target help to where it is most needed.

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

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| Unique reference number | 140096 |
| Local authority | Tower Hamlets |
| Inspection number | 10228728 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 684 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | David Willis |
| Principal | Kevin Jones |
| Website | https://oldfordacademy.paradigmtrust.org |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Old Ford Primary Academy is a larger than average school in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- The school is part of the Paradigm Trust.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

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 of their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, music and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Meetings were held with the principal, senior leaders, staff and pupils. Inspectors also met with the chair and directors of the Paradigm Trust, and spoke to parents and carers at the school gate.
- Inspectors considered 18 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil or staff surveys.

Inspection team

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Deborah Walters | His Majesty's Inspector |
| David Bryant | Ofsted Inspector |
| Amanda Ruthven | Ofsted Inspector |

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