

Inspection of a good school: Star Primary School

Star Lane, Canning Town, London E16 4NH

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2022

Outcome

Star Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Adults and pupils work well together to ensure that pupils' welfare and learning are well promoted. The school is a calm and respectful place and pupils learn happily. They conduct themselves well in lessons and during playtimes. Pupils are kind and encouraging towards each other. They are proud of their school.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. They ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have the help that they need to learn successfully in their different subjects. Pupils work hard, try their best and achieve well.

Bullying is rare. Pupils are safe in school and are confident that staff are there to support them if they need it. Staff are quick to sort out any incidents of poor behaviour, and they do so fairly. They provide high-quality pastoral support for pupils. Pupils have trusted adults that they can talk to if they have any worries.

Pupils enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, such as being eco-councillors, digital leaders and helping younger pupils. They are taught the importance of exercise and healthy eating. Pupils enjoy taking part in the many sporting and cultural activities that staff organise for them, such as choir, residential trips and visits to museums.

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

Leaders and teachers have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have thought carefully about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject.

The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to return to prior learning and build up their knowledge over time. Staff make appropriate adaptations to their teaching so that pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum. These pupils' needs are identified well. Teachers make appropriate links between different subjects to help pupils develop a deep understanding of what they are learning.

Teachers explain new concepts clearly and check carefully that pupils understand what is being taught. As a result, pupils remember their learning. They are confident when talking about what they have learned. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 talked in detail about the work of Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks. Pupils in Year 5 explained accurately all the steps they had taken when creating their own web pages in computing. However, in a few subjects, some of these strong and well-established practices are at an earlier stage of development and implementation. This means, that in those subjects, pupils do not routinely achieve as well as they could.

Staff work positively with parents and carers to ensure that children in the early years get off to a strong start in their education. Learning to read starts right from the moment children start school. The youngest children settle quickly and benefit from the learning opportunities in Nursery. Children's speaking and listening skills develop well. This is because adults hold lots of conversations with children and teach them new words. Pupils practise their phonics every day. Phonics is taught consistently well because all staff have been trained. Pupils read books which are matched to the sounds they have been learning. Pupils who need to catch up read regularly with knowledgeable adults. This supports them to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils also very much enjoy hearing adults read stories to them.

In mathematics, the curriculum includes a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils become fluent in their number and calculation knowledge. They are given regular opportunities to practise and develop their skills. They are also able to use their knowledge to solve problems well. However, occasionally teaching is not as effective as it could be to ensure that pupils gain the deep knowledge of which they are capable.'

Pupils are rarely distracted in lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning. Staff teach pupils about difference, including the different traditions and beliefs in society. Adults make the celebration of diversity an important part of pupils' daily experiences. Pupils are taught the importance of values such as democracy and liberty. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities beyond the classroom. They particularly enjoy taking part in the clubs and activities available after school, including 'Rainbow Club'. They spoke excitedly about completing holiday projects and special curriculum events, such as the recent project on space.

Leaders work well with the governing body. Governors visit the school regularly to assure themselves about the curriculum and safeguarding, for example. Parents and staff are positive about how leaders run the school. Staff appreciate the support they receive, including in managing their workload. They say that changes to the curriculum are successful because leaders arrange suitable training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders have ensured that the systems for staff to report any concerns work well. Staff are well trained and follow procedures consistently. They know the signs that could indicate a pupil is potentially at risk of harm.

Leaders work closely with external agencies so that pupils and their families get the help they need. The pastoral team is skilled in their approach to providing pupils with additional support when it is needed.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to identify and respond to risks. This includes staying safe online and understanding what a safe and healthy relationship is.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, some teachers' subject-specific expertise is not fully secure. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding is occasionally not as deep as it could be. Leaders should ensure that staff have the expertise to implement fully all aspects of curriculum thinking and planning.

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 July 2013.

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	102746
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10240312
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	637
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dianne Tatnell (co-chair) Simon Myers (co-chair)
Headteacher	Lisle Von Buchenroder
Website	www.star.newham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Star Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteachers, as well as other leaders and staff at the school. They met with one of the two co-chairs and the vice-chair of the governing body. An inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, computing, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.

- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their work, behaviour and their experiences of school. They also observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and to Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a variety of documentation. They also considered the views of leaders, parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Chris Birtles, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ellie Whilby

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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