

Inspection of Tidemill Academy

11 Giffin Street, London SE8 4RJ

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Tidemill Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy here. They enjoy playing in the busy playground at breaktimes. This is where they engage in a range of activities, including playing with the hula hoops and balls or dancing to music played through the speakers. School staff nurture positive professional relationships with pupils. Pupils speak to school staff if they are worried about anything. Leaders and school staff ensure pupils are safe.

Pupils typically behave well. Older pupils act as role models to younger ones. They play and read together during the school day. Pupils are taught about different types of bullying, including incidents that occur online. Leaders deal with any incidents of bullying effectively.

Leaders think carefully about pupils' wider opportunities. Leaders use their knowledge of the school's community to help them to determine the wider experiences they provide for pupils. For example, pupils in various year groups took part in a project about careers and worked with a local community group to build a stage in the local market square.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' achievement. In recent time, leaders have identified and introduced carefully thought-through improvements to curriculum thinking across all subjects. Pupils achieve well.

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

Leaders place importance on reading throughout the school. They have recently changed the approach to teaching phonics. Phonics teaching starts when pupils join the school in the Nursery. Pupils are taught phonics every day, including in the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Routinely, teachers check the letters and sounds pupils know and remember. Teachers ensure pupils read books matched to the sounds they learn. Pupils who need extra help receive timely support. Pupils gain confidence, knowledge and skills quickly and build reading fluency. This is because of the school's effective and consistent approach.

The recently introduced curriculum is ambitious and meets the expectations of the national curriculum. Subject leaders have strong subject knowledge. They decide the most important knowledge that pupils must know and remember in different subjects. Typically, they sequence this knowledge effectively from the early years to Year 6. Leaders provide effective training and support for teachers. As a result, teachers teach subjects well. Leaders and teachers use assessment information well to decide what happens next in learning. This includes spotting whether pupils need additional support, including for pupils with SEND. Teachers check that pupils remember knowledge before moving on. For example, they check that pupils know important mathematical knowledge of number, before moving on to more complex problems. Occasionally, older pupils have gaps in their prior knowledge. This makes

it sometimes difficult for them to connect new learning to what they have learned before. Leaders' recent changes to the curriculum from Nursery to Year 6 have been introduced to address this.

Teachers and teaching assistants are trained to adapt the curriculum appropriately for pupils with SEND. Some school staff have received specialised training to provide tailored support. This includes training in speech and language therapy.

Leaders adopt a consistent approach to behaviour from the early years to Year 6. Children settle quickly in the Nursery. They learn the school's rules and expectations rapidly. This is because teachers and teaching assistants in the early years reinforce behaviour in a supportive way. Teachers address any low-level disruption effectively. As a result, learning is not interrupted. Pupils are attentive in class. Children in the early years concentrate for long periods of time.

Pupils have opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. These include taking up roles as leaders for art, Spanish and in the school council. Some pupils use their role to help others. For instance, the pupil-mindfulness leaders make weekly mindful announcements to the whole school to support pupils' mental well-being. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way from the early years onwards. Pupils are taught what to do if they come across any inappropriate content online. Pupils enjoy taking part in educational visits. Leaders think carefully about what visits will have the most benefit for pupils. For example, pupils in the additionally resourced provision recently took part in a theatre workshop which focused on fluent speaking.

Leaders of the trust work closely with the school's leaders and provide appropriate support and challenge. Generally, school staff feel that their workload is manageable. They appreciate recent changes that leaders have made to support their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a thorough approach to safeguarding. They work with a range of safeguarding partners, including social services and the police. Leaders refer concerns to the appropriate agencies correctly. They follow up and escalate concerns where appropriate. Leaders are alert to the safeguarding concerns in the local area and think carefully about measures they can adopt to mitigate these. Leaders provide regular training for school staff. This is to ensure that all school staff are attentive to safeguarding. All school staff know how to recognise that a pupil may need help or support.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, older pupils have gaps in their prior knowledge. Sometimes, this makes it difficult for them to connect new learning to what they have learned before. Leaders should continue their work to review and develop the curriculum and make explicit connections to prior learning, especially for older pupils.

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	137441
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10228800
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	432
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gavin Robert
Headteacher	Marion Drake
Website	www.tidemillacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy school in February 2012. When its predecessor school, Tidemill Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2008, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school has been a part of REAch2 Academy Trust since February 2012.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2022.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with developmental language disorder for up to 16 pupils.
- The school does not make use of 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 in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteacher and representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in art, geography, science, design technology and modern foreign languages.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders, staff and pupils about measures to safeguard pupils' welfare. Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records. This includes checks leaders make on staff when they start working at the school.
- Inspectors visited the playground and observed behaviour at lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed staff's, parents' and pupils' responses to Ofsted's online surveys and spoke to some parents before school.

Inspection team

Andrea Bedeau, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Seamus Gibbons	Ofsted Inspector
Allan McLean	Ofsted Inspector

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