

Inspection of Melcombe Primary School

Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, safe and immensely proud of their school. Leaders and staff expect pupils to achieve well. They enhance the curriculum with a range of opportunities and experiences to make the learning interesting and meaningful to pupils. Staff create an environment where everyone is supported to succeed. As a result, pupils thrive under their care and value their education.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show high levels of respect, care and courtesy towards each other and adults. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are clear that should any bullying occur, they would tell an adult. Any concerns are resolved quickly.

Leaders want pupils to take an active part in their community. For instance, pupils share their learning experiences with another school that shares the same building. Pupils from both schools enjoyed learning together about the cultural significance of Chinese New Year and watching a live 'lion dance'. Leaders arrange for older pupils to visit local secondary schools in preparation for the next stage of their education.

Pupils love reading. Leaders set specific reading challenges for each year group and every pupil's success is celebrated in the classroom. Pupil librarians are diligent in their role, helping their peers to find books and keeping the library well organised.

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

Leaders have put in place an ambitious and well-designed curriculum which covers the full breadth of what is expected nationally. There has been careful thought about how the curriculum is sequenced so that pupils revisit, practise and embed key ideas over time. For instance, in geography, pupils in Year 1 learn the locations and names of the United Kingdom's four countries. Teachers build on this knowledge carefully, for example in Year 5, when pupils go on to learn about trade links between countries. Similarly, in Spanish, pupils learn a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, and apply this knowledge accurately when writing to their pen pals in Spain.

However, the curriculum in some other subjects is at an earlier stage of development. Staff expertise is not consistently strong. Although leaders have established what pupils need to learn, they have not considered how they will check that pupils are remembering the essential knowledge taught. As a result, pupils' errors and misconceptions are not consistently identified and addressed. This limits some pupils from deepening their understanding and tackling more difficult ideas in these subjects.

Reading is prioritised. Leaders have recently overhauled the reading curriculum and introduced a new phonics programme. Most staff have received some training to teach the programme as intended. Books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they are learning. This supports pupils to read with increasing

confidence. Although all staff use the agreed strategies and resources, a few staff are less confident in delivering the new programme. This means that some pupils do not consistently get sufficient time to practise the sounds that they are learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff understand pupils' different needs and adapt their teaching approaches to ensure that these are met. For example, staff help pupils to understand new learning by breaking tasks down into smaller steps. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible and are well supported to learn and remember more. Leaders also make sure that these pupils access all the wider opportunities available, including after-school activities.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they display consistently positive attitudes to learning. Learning is not disrupted. From the early years onwards, children consistently demonstrate high levels of respect for each other. They are supported to be positive in the face of adversity. Pupils are also encouraged to take an active role in their school. For example, the school council has helped to select the lunchtime catering supplier. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute positively to the community. As well as fundraising for national charities, pupils in the choir have performed to residents in a local care home.

Leaders, and those responsible for governance, have been integral to securing considerable improvements since the last inspection. They have a clear sense of the school's effectiveness and have identified the right areas to improve further. This includes the ongoing development of subject leaders new to their post. Staff feel supported with their workload and well-being. They said that leaders are approachable, listen to staff's views and act on any concerns.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive regular and up-to-date training. This means that they know what signs might indicate a pupil is at risk of harm, what to do, and who to tell. Leaders liaise effectively with external agencies when needed to access specialist help for pupils and their families.

Pupils trust adults in school. They are confident in speaking to adults if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including when using online technology.

Leaders ensure that safer recruitment procedures are robust. They liaise regularly with the co-located school to ensure that any visitors to the site are appropriately vetted and accompanied.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas, staff do not have sufficiently strong subject knowledge and expertise. This means that, at times, the curriculum, including in early reading, is not implemented consistently. Leaders should continue to develop staff's expertise in different subjects as well as in curriculum leadership.
- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not decided how they will check what pupils know and remember. This means that some pupils have gaps in knowledge that are not consistently identified or addressed. Leaders should ensure that teachers check what pupils have learned in different subjects and that teaching addresses any difficulties that pupils may have in learning the intended curriculum.

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	100334
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10241642
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jolie Collett and Louise Jones (co-chairs)
Executive headteacher	Anne-Marie Strachan
Website	www.melcombe.lbhf.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Melcombe Primary School is part of the Thames Federation, which includes two local nursery schools.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team since the last inspection. The executive headteacher took up post in April 2021.
- The current governing board took full responsibility for governance from September 2021.
- The school building currently accommodates Kensington Wade School on a temporary basis.
- 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. The 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 executive headteacher, the head of school and other members of the senior leadership team. They also met with representatives from the governing body and two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and Spanish. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspectors viewed the single central record of pre-employment checks and met with the designated safeguarding leader. They reviewed documentation related to safeguarding, including records of concerns.
- The inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils to discuss their views.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through Ofsted's online Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Alison Colenso, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rekha Bhakoo	Ofsted Inspector
Karyn Ray	Ofsted Inspector

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