

Inspection of a good school: Elizabeth Selby Infants' School

Old Bethnal Green Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 6PP

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

Elizabeth Selby Infants' School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils come to school eagerly. They enjoy their learning, especially the way that their lessons help them to experience and learn new knowledge. Pupils are polite and considerate to each other and behave well. During their lunch breaks and playtimes, they know how to play together in a sensible and kind way.

Pupils readily get involved in their lessons, including listening carefully to books and stories and joining in with rhymes. They are offered many opportunities to promote their personal development. Pupils enjoy the educational trips which enhance their learning and aim to build their confidence. For example, they visited a city farm and compared the animals at the farm to the school's ducks, rabbits and chickens. Pupils are also encouraged to become active in the local community. For instance, they paint pictures, have tea or sing at a local care home for older people.

Pupils know that they are well cared for by staff, and this helps them to feel safe. Working closely with the nearby junior school, leaders strive for pupils to have an educational experience that is ambitious and tailored to their needs and starting points. This helps to make sure that pupils achieve well across the curriculum. They also have lots of opportunities to take on responsibilities in age-appropriate ways.

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

Leaders have created a broad and rich curriculum. They review the curriculum regularly and are reflective about ways that could make things even better. Curriculum thinking is shaped by the overarching goal of preparing pupils well for the next stage of learning. To support this, staff collaborate with the junior school nearby to ensure that pupils' move to Year 3 goes smoothly.

Leaders' plans for the curriculum make clear what pupils should learn, starting in the early years. The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have been carefully considered by leaders when they select and

organise curriculum content. In physical education, for example, leaders make sure that pupils learn the things that they need to play a range of sports successfully. This knowledge is taught in a step-by-step manner and pupils get lots of practice. They especially enjoy using what they are taught in games and competitions, including against other schools.

Staff speak highly about the training that they receive and how this helps them to understand and teach the curriculum. Staff have good subject knowledge. For example, in mathematics, staff explain information clearly so that pupils understand key ideas. They select activities and practical resources to build up pupils' understanding effectively. Teaching also helps pupils to use correct vocabulary. All of this starts in the Nursery and Reception classes, where staff are skilled in helping children to master basic concepts, such as counting.

Pupils with SEND are identified and supported well. Leaders have ensured that the staff who work with these pupils are well trained. Where needed, leaders have sought additional support from outside agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Teachers adapt their teaching to support pupils with SEND to work towards the same learning goals as all other pupils.

Pupils behave well. When children join the school, they quickly learn and follow the routines that leaders arrange. In the Nursery class, children enjoy greeting each other at the beginning of the session and sharing time together.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have constructed an early reading curriculum which builds pupils' phonics knowledge in an organised and logical way. Pupils take home books that are matched to the sounds taught in class. If any pupil falls behind, they are helped to catch up with their peers. Stories are shared by teachers regularly. Pupils relish listening to the richness of the language. These things help to develop their love of reading. Overall, the reading curriculum enables all pupils to learn to read well. Nevertheless, in a few instances, staff who teach the phonics programme have not had well-targeted training to strengthen their expertise. On occasions, the delivery of the phonics programme lacks precision. When this happens, it means that pupils are not as well supported as they could be to remember the sounds that they have been taught. Leaders are already tackling this by providing further staff training.

Pupils take part in a wide range of opportunities beyond the academic curriculum. They are taught about fundamental British values, such as tolerance and democracy. Pupils also learn about other faiths and visit places of worship, such as a mosque, the Buddhist centre and St Matthews, the local church. Leaders make sure that pupils experience cultural events, for instance through visits to the White Chapel art gallery and poetry competitions.

Staff spoke positively about leaders being mindful of their workload, for example by reviewing the approach to marking. Leaders have also created dedicated spaces to support staff well-being.

Governors work with determination to offer appropriate support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that safeguarding has a high priority. The relevant recruitment checks are carried out on staff before they start to work at the school. Staff know pupils and their families very well, and are vigilant to concerns that arise.

Leaders keep accurate records of any safeguarding concerns to check that pupils get the right help at the right time. They make sure that staff are trained regularly so that they can spot and report any risks that pupils may face. If there is ever a concern, leaders act quickly. This includes securing additional help from outside agencies to support pupils and their families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few instances, staff's knowledge of how to deliver the phonics curriculum is still developing. This results in occasions where the phonics programme is not delivered with precision, and in turn, reduces how well pupils are supported to strengthen and apply their knowledge. Leaders should continue their work to strengthen the expertise of all staff in teaching the early reading curriculum.

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 November 2017.

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	100908
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10255515
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Oliver Hopwood
Headteacher	Ann Wood
Website	www.elizabethselbyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- This a two-form-entry infant school which offers places in the Nursery class for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in a range of other subjects with leaders.

- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and talking to staff and pupils.
- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and records of behaviour.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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