

Inspection of Halley Primary School

Halley Street, London E14 7SS

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Halley Primary School is for everyone. Leaders go out of their way to include all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), in the fun and excitement of learning. Teachers make learning interesting by giving pupils work that helps them to think for themselves. The curriculum enables pupils to learn a lot about the subjects that they study.

In classrooms and playgrounds, pupils show that they know how to behave. They live up to leaders' high expectations of behaviour with ease. Lessons take place free from interruptions and are calm and purposeful. Bullying is uncommon but pupils are confident that if it does happen, it will be dealt with effectively. Pupils report that they feel safe and well cared for. This is because leaders make pupils' safety a priority.

Leaders' work to develop the provision for pupils' personal development is especially strong. Pupils are taught to show great respect and tolerance for everyone. Every pupil is valued. For example, leaders go out of their way to reward pupils for their personal achievements. Pupils' contribution to the work of the school through, for example, the communication team adds significantly to the feeling of community and togetherness. Pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Leaders, staff and governors have created an aspirational curriculum that covers all the national curriculum subjects. To get the curriculum right, they have consulted extensively with parents and carers. Subjects are planned to ensure that pupils learn the important concepts before moving on to more complex work. For example, in mathematics pupils build on their knowledge of arithmetic to tackle more complex problems. In English, pupils read books of increasing difficulty as they move up the school.

In classrooms, teachers are careful to break learning down into bite-sized chunks, so that pupils have the fundamental subject knowledge and skills needed to achieve well. Lessons regularly include a recap of previous learning, for example in mathematics. This helps pupils to remember the important facts. It also enables teachers to check whether there are gaps in pupils' learning, or if they are finding things difficult. Teachers are skilled in adapting the work by, for example, going over an idea again.

Despite the strengths in the curriculum, particularly in breadth and ambition, there are some weaknesses in the way it is put into practice. In some subjects, such as design and technology, the delivery of the curriculum is not precise enough to ensure that pupils are enabled to reach the high aspirations set out in leaders' curriculum thinking. Sometimes, this is because teachers' subject knowledge lacks

depth. This means that pupils' learning is incomplete, making it difficult for them to build connections between different bits of knowledge. At other times, the expectations of what teachers want pupils to learn by the end of an activity are not precise enough. The longer term, aspirational objectives are well defined but the specific knowledge that teachers want pupils to learn, there and then, is not as clear.

In the Nursery and Reception classes, the curriculum gives children the foundations that they need for learning as they move up the school. Early reading is taught effectively, and starts in the Nursery class. Teachers are well trained in how to deliver the phonics programme. As a result, the teaching of early reading is consistent and moves smoothly from Reception into Years 1 and 2. Reading is a key priority in the early years. The proportion of pupils reading accurately and fluently by the end of Year 1 is increasing.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Their individual needs are identified quickly, and extra help targeted carefully. Leaders' and staff's commitment to including every pupil helps to ensure that those with SEND experience the same aspirational curriculum as others. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, and the assembly programme, are structured extremely well to promote pupils' personal development. The quality of provision is ambitious and rich. The sharp focus on pupils' personal development is enhanced effectively by educational visits and after-school activities. There are plentiful after-school clubs on offer, for example in cooking and sports, and these are very popular. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to play a musical instrument. Pupils who choose to continue with this often play in the local orchestra.

Leaders ensure that professional development for staff is integral to the school's work. External and school-based training are helping to give staff the knowledge they need to teach the curriculum. Leaders recognise that further training is needed in some areas. Leaders consider staff workload and well-being carefully in their decisions.

Governors use their considerable expertise to ensure that leaders are challenged and supported in equal measure.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders give safeguarding a high priority. Ongoing training ensures that staff know how to identify those pupils who may be at risk. Staff know their pupils and families particularly well. As a result, they identify concerns quickly and refer these promptly to leaders. Carefully maintained records mean that leaders can cross reference information, helping them to provide the right support at the right time.

Vulnerable pupils are given lots of support. Leaders meet regularly and frequently to consider pupils' needs. This helps to ensure that no pupil is allowed to go unnoticed.

Links with local authority services are strong but leaders are quick to step in with support where necessary.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some weaknesses in the way the ambitious curriculum is put into practice. In some cases, curriculum delivery is not precise enough to ensure that pupils are enabled to reach the high aspirations of what is intended in a subject. Teachers do not have deep enough subject pedagogical knowledge about some parts of the curriculum. In other cases, the specific knowledge that teachers want pupils to learn is not identified sharply enough. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively across all subjects, so that their aspirational intent is realised in full. They should ensure that professional development is focused closely on raising teachers' subject knowledge and their knowledge of how to explain curriculum content to pupils effectively.

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	100938
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10242000
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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Keith Clarke
Headteacher	Shoshannah Thompson
Website	www.halley.towerhamlets.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	23 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Halley Primary School is smaller than the average-sized school.
- 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 in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and design and technology. 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 visited some other subjects.

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors also met with school governors, including the chair.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s Parent View survey, including written comments.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school. Responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey and staff survey were also reviewed.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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His Majesty's Inspector

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