

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Turney Primary and Secondary Special School

Turney Road, London SE21 8LX

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Turney School is highly regarded by parents and carers. They have complete trust in the staff to care for and educate their child. Many parents describe the care their child receives as exceptional. One parent echoed the sentiments of others, stating, 'The school has transformed my child's life, and they have achieved things I never thought possible.' Pupils are safe and happy here.

Developing good communication is at the heart of the curriculum. Staff are skilled at building pupils' communication skills. They use a wide variety of resources, including technology. This helps pupils to find their voice and feel included. The school council is an active group that makes suggestions for improving life at school.

Well-established daily routines create a predictable environment for pupils, which helps them to engage well with their learning. Everyone has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Leaders and teachers swiftly identify and address any unkind behaviours, including bullying. Pupils form positive relationships with adults in the school.

Pupils actively participate in a wide range of opportunities that promote their personal development. For example, they have opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through visits to a local garden centre and the school café.

Students in the sixth form benefit from a variety of practical activities that help them to prepare for life beyond school.

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

Pupils' needs have significantly changed since the previous inspection. In response, the school is committed to adapting the curriculum so that it continues to meet the needs of every pupil.

In most subjects, the curriculum is well designed to help pupils build on their learning over time. The humanities curriculum is particularly well thought out. However, in some subjects, leaders have not identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result, some staff are not as clear as they should be about the most important concepts that they should teach. This is particularly evident in the secondary-phase department. Occasionally, this prevents pupils from learning as well as they should.

Pupils' communication and language development is highly personalised. This is a strength of the school. Adults demonstrate effectively the language they want pupils to learn. They skilfully use visual images and objects to reinforce learning. As a result, pupils develop their communication skills exceptionally well, which also helps them to manage their behaviour. Learning is not disrupted due to poor behaviour.

Daily reading for pleasure in each class group helps pupils to develop a love of reading. Leaders have established a whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics for the small number of pupils who are ready for this. However, the books provided to develop pupils' reading skills sometimes do not match pupils' needs and existing knowledge. This limits their progress.

Breaktimes offer a variety of well-planned activities for pupils to enjoy. Those who prefer to have some quiet time by themselves are supervised by well-trained staff. Pupils are treated with dignity and given freedom to make their own choices. This includes finding a quiet space to self-regulate when things feel overwhelming. In such instances, pupils are given the time and strategies they need to re-engage.

Students in the sixth form benefit from well-thought-out activities that interest them and support their learning. The school ensures that learning extends beyond the classroom by organising a variety of enriching visits, such as trips to the local garden centre and the River Thames. Many students also enjoy learning to ride a bicycle at school.

The school has set out a clear vision of what it wants pupils to achieve and experience during their time at the school. The excellent enrichment programme offers all pupils opportunities to participate in activities they would not otherwise have access to. This helps build their confidence and resilience. Activities range from running a café to learning about communication in social settings.

Overall, the school has had a significant positive impact on the lives of the pupils and their families. Parents particularly appreciate the strides their child makes in independence: learning to dress themselves, cope in a shop, or butter a slice of bread.

Staff feel valued and extremely well supported by leaders. Staff talk with warmth about the culture of mutual support that pervades throughout the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking, particularly in the secondary-phase department. This hinders some pupils' progression through the curriculum. The school should ensure that they clearly identify the key knowledge that pupils must learn and the order in which they will learn this content.
- Early reading is not taught equally well across the school. Where it is less effective, the programme is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' individual needs and their existing knowledge. This means that some pupils make less progress than they could. The school should take action to ensure that, where pupils are at an early stage of learning to read, phonics is consistently well taught.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 2018.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100643
<b>Local authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289782
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	143
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	18
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sue Osborn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Adams
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.turneyschool.co.uk">www.turneyschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	23 to 24 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with severe learning disabilities, many of whom have autism.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- All pupils have an education, health, and care plan.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, communication and personal development. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with teachers. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and they observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff about safeguarding, behaviour and their workload. Inspectors also looked at the responses from staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Francis Gonzalez, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Hook

Ofsted Inspector

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