

Inspection of an outstanding school: Earl's Court Free School Primary

Cambridge Grove, London W6 0LB

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 January 2024

Outcome

Earl's Court Free School Primary continues to be an outstanding school.

The headteacher of this school is Marianne Chapman. This school is part of Knowledge Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ian Hunter, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Suzie Hobart. There is also a director of primary education, Laura Lund.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are delighted to be a part of this school. They prosper in this school community, which cares deeply for them. Pupils are safe in school. They are confident that if they have any concerns or worries, they can go to any adult for help.

The school has the highest aspirations for all its pupils. Pupils are encouraged to be kind, inclusive, scholarly, inspired, and resilient. Pupils achieve very well in assessments, reaching standards which, in most cases, are higher than those found nationally. They produce work of consistently high quality across different subjects and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They are polite, courteous and respectful towards each other and towards adults. Pupils are confident and articulate. They follow instructions promptly and effectively. The school is highly successful in ensuring that pupils attend regularly. This is because pupils, parents and carers value the high-quality education here. Those who are at risk of non-attendance are identified and supported at the earliest opportunity.

Parents appreciate the excellent education their children receive from the school. The comment of one parent echoed those of many others: 'Great teaching, rich and ambitious curriculum, wonderful communication, supportive atmosphere, and outstanding results.'

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

The school aims for its pupils to acquire a deep body of knowledge across all areas of the curriculum. The school has designed a rigorous, knowledge-rich curriculum that is well

considered and carefully arranged. In each subject, pupils continuously build on their learning. As a result, pupils are reaching the ambitious end points the school has set for them.

Leaders and staff at all levels are equally ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They make sure that the needs of these pupils are fully known to the adults working with them. Staff are supported and trained to help pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum well. They make highly effective adaptations to the curriculum. The school's close working with experts and specialists also enables these pupils to achieve well.

The curriculum is delivered well, and teachers' subject knowledge is strong. A focus on the teaching of key vocabulary has ensured that pupils are learning important concepts across subjects. In geography, for example, younger pupils show understanding of various settlements. They know the differences between a hamlet, a village, a town, and a county. Children in the early years are also taught subject-specific vocabulary. In Reception, children name the planets in the solar system as they learn about space.

Subject matter is introduced clearly and thoroughly explored. Resources are carefully chosen to help pupils to understand new concepts in depth. In mathematics, for example, pupils know how to use practical resources like rods and number blocks to work out calculations. Pupils' reasoning reflects deep understanding of the mathematical concepts they are studying.

Reading is given the highest priority in this school. Experts from the trust designed the phonics curriculum. It has been effective in ensuring that pupils are reading fluently before they finish Year 2. Staff at all levels are trained as expert teachers of reading.

The school uses assessment information well. In phonics, any pupils who are falling behind are identified promptly. Gaps in their learning are addressed effectively, and these pupils catch up quickly. Pupils practise their phonics by reading books that contain sounds they already know. Pupils read often and widely. They show a genuine love of reading and of books. They enjoy hearing adults read to them daily.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional. They participate actively in discussions. They collaborate well with each other through, for example, 'talk tasks' and giving feedback in class. They work hard in lessons. Disruptions to learning are rare.

Pupils receive plenty of opportunities to develop as leaders. They experience democracy first hand as they elect the school's head boy or girl. They also choose their class ambassadors and school council representatives. Pupils enjoy participating in school trips to enhance their learning of the curriculum. There are many after-school clubs on offer, and the take up of these is high.

The support of the multi-academy trust has been instrumental in the school's success. The local governing board performs its delegated responsibilities diligently. The board provides clarity of purpose and strategic direction to the school. Experts from the trust provide advice and purposeful challenge to leaders and staff. The result is a school that is

making a clear difference to the pupils it serves, regardless of their background or their starting points.

The school makes a considerable contribution to supporting staff with their workload. Leaders have streamlined processes to enable staff to focus on the delivery of the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 June 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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	140811
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10296732
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Suzie Hobart
CEO of the trust	Ian Hunter
Headteacher	Marianne Chapman
Website	www.wlfs-earlscourt.org
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school shares a site with another primary school from the same trust.
- Due to building works, physical education, art, and music were being taught off-site at the time of this inspection. These lessons were taking place in a local church within walking distance of the main school site.

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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the CEO, the director of primary, the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.

- 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, geography, and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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. The inspector also considered the views of parents through their responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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