

# Inspection of Bellenden Primary School

Dewar Street, London SE15 4JP

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils feel well supported, engaged and prepared for the future in this small and nurturing school. Parents and carers, pupils and staff all expressed how they feel that the school is at the centre of its community. Pupils enjoy their learning and have positive attitudes to school. This is reflected in how much they can remember about what they have been taught in previous lessons.

Pupils behave well in class and on the playground. During breaktimes, they enjoy using play equipment, playing football and basketball and working together to build dens. In lessons, they demonstrate positive attitudes towards their work. For instance, pupils take pride in presenting their workbooks neatly, and they listen attentively to teachers.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Staff know how to best support all pupils with learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Lessons are adapted to meet pupils' needs so that they can achieve success in their learning.

Pupils appreciate the various additional opportunities the school provides, such as sporting, musical and cultural events. Parents are invited into the school to share music performances. Pupils learn to work together to perform syncopated rhythms and harmonies on the steel pans. These aspects of the curriculum have been given a great deal of thought to really enrich pupils' experience of school.

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

Staff across the school teach the curriculum well. Subject leaders have considered what should be taught at each stage. The school has developed an ambitious curriculum in most subjects. For example, in mathematics, staff have carefully considered the small steps pupils need to take in their learning in order to develop secure mathematical knowledge and reasoning skills. The curriculum supports pupils to apply their understanding. They build their understanding of key concepts in a subject systematically.

The school has recently made changes to what is being taught to further strengthen how well pupils learn. In some subjects, like mathematics and reading, new approaches are well embedded. As a result, pupils develop detailed and deep knowledge. In a small number of subjects, the school's work to ensure that pupils acquire deep knowledge is not as well advanced. This includes in the early years, where the planned learning does not consistently match the expectations of the school's curriculum.

The school has given careful consideration to how to teach early reading. An ambitious phonics programme is taught consistently well throughout the school. Children begin learning the sounds that letters make as soon as they join the school. Staff regularly check to see that all pupils understand and remember what they have

been taught. From early years onwards, pupils who fall behind are given additional support to help them to catch up quickly. Older pupils are confident, fluent readers. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and books that they enjoy reading.

School leaders quickly and accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. The school works closely with parents to ensure that it can provide the best possible support. Lessons are carefully adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, with teaching typically focusing on helping them to learn the curriculum well.

Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects that they are teaching. They use precise vocabulary to explain to pupils what they are learning. To ensure that pupils are ready for their future learning, the school is continuing to focus on how pupils use language, including subject-specific words. Staff routinely check that pupils understand the meaning of any new vocabulary that is being used.

Lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils concentrate well in class and respond quickly to teachers' instructions. Younger children settle into school life well and understand the school's routines and expectations quickly. The school works to support families and pupils where attendance causes concern. This work has meant overall attendance rates are improving.

Pupils are supported to develop a wide range of leadership skills through roles as playground leaders and members of the school council. Pupils regularly participate in sports clubs, such as football and basketball. Pupils learn how to stay healthy and develop respect for all in the community. The school's provision to promote pupils' personal development is rich and inclusive.

The governing body knows the school well. It finds out about any new initiatives that are being used in the school and how well these are improving pupils' learning. Governors draw on a rich source of information to identify where the school's strengths and challenges lay. They use their skills and knowledge to challenge and support the school effectively.

Staff know that leaders take their workload very seriously. Leaders take workload into account when making decisions or any changes. Staff appreciate the opportunities for professional development that the school and the wider federation can offer. Staff use their training to enhance the quality of education provided.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The early years curriculum is not being taught as thoroughly as the school intends. This means that some children in the early years do not develop their knowledge and skills as well as they could in some areas of learning. The school should ensure that the activities chosen to deliver the early years curriculum are suitable for strengthening children's learning and development.
- The curriculum in a small number of foundations subjects is not as effective as it is in other areas of the curriculum. Because of this, pupils' understanding is not extended and deepened as well. Leaders should continue with their plans to improve the curriculum in these subjects so that pupils' learning is consistently strong across all areas of the 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' is used to mean pupils with 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>	100775
<b>Local authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296574
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Judith Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gregory Doey (executive headteacher) Julie Ireland (headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bellenden.southwark.sch.uk">www.bellenden.southwark.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school has a Nursery class for three- and four-year-olds.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and headteacher. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and spoke with representatives from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers. They also spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were 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 also spoke to some parents and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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