

Inspection of a good school: William Bellamy Primary School

Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, Essex RM10 7HX

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

William Bellamy Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' well-being is central to this nurturing and happy school. They appreciate the support that they receive from staff. For example, they like how staff help them to understand new ideas and learn from their mistakes.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They understand what bullying is. If it happens, they said that staff sort it out promptly. Pupils are kept safe here.

The school sets high expectations. Pupils rise to meet these. They learn the curriculum well. Pupils behave sensibly in class and follow the school's routines. They are polite and considerate of each other. When occasionally pupils do not live up to the high expectations, the school responds effectively and fairly. Pupils reflect on their behaviour and increasingly understand the impact of their actions on others. Staff and pupils feel well supported by this system.

The school has designed a curriculum that aims to broaden pupils' life experiences. Pupils appreciate being able to attend a wide range of clubs and activities. The school also provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills. For example, pupils can become ambassadors for diversity or science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Pupils visit many different places of worship, such as churches and a Gurdwara. They are taught why it is important to respect different ways of life. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious for all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders quickly identify pupils' needs and starting points. They tailor learning to ensure that these pupils are well supported with their academic and wider development. This includes those pupils who attend the resourced provision, and pupils who join midway through an academic year.

The school's close links with parents and carers keep them informed about their children's learning and how best to support them. This begins in early years. Here, children are taught the foundational knowledge that they need to learn successfully across the curriculum in the future.

The school makes sure that all its pupils experience an aspirational curriculum, including the high proportion of pupils who join after Year 1, often with little or no prior experience of school or speaking English. For these pupils, the curriculum ensures that they develop secure foundations in English and mathematics, and in turn, access the full curriculum. It also supports their readiness for secondary education. Nevertheless, some pupils have not been at the school long enough to fully catch up in their learning. This is reflected in the 2023 statutory assessment outcomes, which were low overall.

The school promotes a love of reading in all pupils. This is clear in the way that pupils discuss their favourite authors and books. They also take delight in visits to the school library, a double-decker bus on the school field. Pupils' reading develops well as they progress through the school. This is because leaders have thought carefully about how the curriculum teaches pupils new vocabulary and to understand what they read.

The approach to early reading is also well planned. Teaching is closely matched to pupils' stage of learning in the chosen phonics programme. Staff are well trained in ensuring that pupils' phonics knowledge develops securely. While the school's work on early reading is effective overall, in a few instances, teaching activities are not maximising the time spent learning and practising phonics. When this happens, it decreases the impact of the school's work to help all pupils to get better at reading.

Teachers feel well supported to deliver the curriculum as intended. Staff routinely refer back to what has been learned in earlier lessons. They help pupils to build on this knowledge and remember what has been taught. However, there are times when teaching does not promote pupils' understanding sufficiently well. For example, some explanations of concepts lack clarity. Sometimes, learning tasks are not helpful in developing pupils' understanding. This prevents some pupils from learning knowledge securely.

Attendance is a high priority. Reasons for pupils' absence are analysed and well understood, enabling the school to take clear, well-targeted actions. This work, including developing partnerships with parents, is bringing about a clear reduction in absence rates.

The school promotes pupils' all-round development well. Pupils learn about the differences between people. They are taught to be accepting of others and treat everyone with kindness and empathy. For example, the school holds 'special days' where pupils learn about different cultures, religions and perspectives. The school is thorough in its approach to supporting pupils to behave well and develop their self-discipline.

Staff feel valued. They appreciate how leaders consider their workload and well-being when introducing new initiatives. They also recognise the clear guidance that leaders provide on how to support pupils to achieve the best that they can.

The governing body knows the school well. It has the knowledge and skills to challenge and support school leaders in their work to make improvements. For example, the governing body seeks out a range of information on the quality of education and uses expert external advice to check how reliable this information is.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few instances, the teaching of early reading is not making the most of the time that pupils spend learning and practising phonics. As a result, on occasion, pupils who struggle are not supported with their reading as well as they could be. The school should ensure that the delivery of the phonics curriculum is maximising the opportunities that pupils have to practise and get better at using phonics for reading.
- Sometimes, teaching does not promote pupils' understanding as well as it might. This is the case when explanations of concepts lack clarity or where activities are not linked well enough to what teachers want pupils to learn. Both of these things prevent pupils from acquiring deep and detailed knowledge. The school should continue to refine approaches to implementing the curriculum so that all pupils can achieve in line with leaders' high expectations. This includes supporting staff to improve their subject knowledge, and in turn, how well they explain key ideas in a subject.

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 April 2014.

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	101226
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10313883
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	952
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Speller James Walker (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Gillian Massar
Website	www.williambellamy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specialist additional resource provision for pupils with SEND. The provision caters for pupils aged from four to 11 years with identified complex additional needs. All pupils in the provision have an education, health and care plan.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school partway through an academic year is high.

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. 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 headteacher and deputy headteachers. They also met with members of the governing body, including the co-chairs of the governing body. In addition, inspectors spoke with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history 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 the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil online surveys.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Wright

His Majesty's Inspector

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