

Inspection of The Orion Primary School

Grahame Park Way, Mill Hill, London NW7 2AL

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 2024

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

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since March 2015.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend this school. They receive a high-quality education and achieve extremely well. Pupils benefit from a rich programme of personal development, which helps to develop their resilience and confidence. Pupils participate in an extraordinary range of opportunities beyond the curriculum. The school ensures that there are no barriers to what pupils can achieve. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

From an early age, pupils learn to cooperate with each other and respect others. In the early years, staff make sure that children understand and follow clear routines. For example, they learn to listen, take turns and to persevere when a task is difficult. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and well mannered.

Pupils care for each other and are keen to take on different leadership roles. For example, pupils act as 'kindness champions' to support younger pupils playing games in the playground. Pupils are encouraged to share their worries with staff. Staff respond promptly to individual concerns. This helps pupils to feel safe in school.

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

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, are crystal clear about their vision. In line with this, they work together to make the school 'happy, harmonious and hopeful' so that every child has the chance to shine. The highly ambitious curriculum combines academic study with a broad range of exciting experiences.

Staff have a deep knowledge of the curriculum. They know precisely what pupils need to learn and remember over time. Staff have subject expertise and are supported through their staff training to deliver the curriculum exceptionally well. Staff regularly check pupils' understanding in lessons and make sure that no pupils are left behind. Staff are quick to rectify any misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge. Their guidance ensures that pupils gain an in-depth understanding of the topics and subjects that they study. Pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils access a rich range of texts across the curriculum. They are happy to share their love of reading and explain how they read widely and often. Children in the early years learn to read as soon as they start school and enjoy a rich variety of songs, stories and rhymes. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read use books that match the sounds they know. This ensures that pupils can build up their confidence and fluency in reading. Through the school's 'Word Up' programme, pupils develop their vocabulary and discussions skills. Skilful interventions and support from staff ensure that pupils who find reading more difficult catch up quickly.

The school has high expectations of pupils, including those with SEND and pupils in the additionally resourced provision. Staff identify pupils' needs accurately and put personalised support in place. This begins in the Nursery Year, with clear communication between the school, parents and carers and a wide range of professionals who provide specialist support. This ensures that pupils with SEND get the support that they need as early as possible. Consequently, they flourish, achieve well and participate fully in school life.

Pupils take pride in their work and behave exceptionally well. Leaders work with parents to encourage high attendance rates. Pupils are polite and their responsible behaviour contributes to the calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school.

The school promotes equality and values diversity. Pupils are taught about the importance of tolerance and respect. Various activities are on offer to help broaden pupils' cultural understanding. For example, pupils visit art galleries and experience live music and performances in the school's theatre. Pupils support others through charitable initiatives. These experiences, and many more besides, ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in modern society.

The school considers the workload and well-being of staff when making decisions. Staff and governors are dedicated to children, pupils and families in the community. Governors provide highly effective support and challenge to school leaders. Staff are proud to work at the school. Parents could not praise the school enough. Many described the school as 'fantastic'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	131970
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10331630
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	965
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nagus Naventhiva
Headteacher	Chris Flathers
Website	www.theorion.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 March 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Gold Star Federation, which includes one other local school, Goldbeaters Primary School.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has an additional resourced provision, 'The Jets'. The provision caters for pupils with autism and has places for up to 21 places aged four to 11.
- The school has a Nursery provision for two-year-olds, offering part-time funded places for up to 15 hours per week.

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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the co-headteachers, subject leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff, including teachers in the early stages of their teaching career. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school development plan and documentation relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and governance.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents, staff and pupils were considered through discussions and from the responses to Ofsted's questionnaires, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Phil Garnham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jennifer Bax	Ofsted Inspector
David Bryant	Ofsted Inspector
Jeff Cole	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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