Inspection of Ark Oval Primary Academy

98 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6BA

Inspection dates:	17 and 18 June 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Kate Magliocco. This school is part of Ark Schools, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Lucy Heller, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tina Alexandrou.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils feel safe and are confident that staff will support them to resolve any worries that they may have. Staff know the pupils well. They ensure that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are appropriately supported in their learning.

Pupils enjoy playing and learning together. They show respect for staff and each other. The school's consistent approach to managing behaviour ensures that issues are dealt with fairly. Pupils spoke to the visiting inspectors confidently and clearly. They were keen to tell them about their school.

The school has high ambitions for all pupils. It has created a broad and balanced curriculum that begins as soon as pupils enter Reception. Most pupils learn and achieve well across different subjects.

Pupils benefit from a range of educational outings, clubs, and cultural experiences that the school provides. They visit museums, art galleries and places of worship. Pupils enjoy different after-school clubs, such as multi-sports, football, and drama. The school also invites visitors in to enrich learning. For example, pupils learn about money and financial management from visitors from a bank.

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

School leaders have a clear vision for the school. They want all pupils to achieve their best, both academically and in their wider character development. This is in readiness for their move to the next stage.

The school prioritises developing pupils' knowledge in reading so they can access learning successfully across the curriculum. Staff are well trained to deliver the chosen phonics programme. Pupils confidently blend sounds to read words. The books they read match those sounds. Staff ensure they offer effective support to pupils who fall behind so they can catch up. The school inspires a love of reading in different ways. This includes visits from authors and 'Come Read with Me' sessions, where parents can visit the school to read with their child.

The school has worked hard to develop the curriculum and, in most subjects, has created progressive and ambitious sequences of learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They generally present learning effectively. Teachers check pupils' previous learning. They identify and correct any misconceptions before introducing new knowledge.

Pupils are supported in their learning in different ways across school. For example, in Reception, pupils use cubes and number grids to help practise their counting skills. In geography lessons, pupils are given sentence starters to help them describe different geographical areas. In many subjects, pupils learn to use subject specific vocabulary to

express their thoughts and ideas. For example, pupils in Year 6 describe features of 'pop art' and the different techniques the artist has used, using the correct subject language.

The needs of pupils with SEND are identified as quickly as possible, and they access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff are appropriately trained and support pupils effectively to ensure they achieve well. The school works closely with external agencies to identify and meet pupils' needs.

In some wider subjects, the curriculum is not always presented in the most effective fashion. Some learning activities do not focus clearly on the important knowledge and skills the pupils need to learn. At times, the learning is not broken down to allow pupils to absorb new information in manageable amounts. On occasion, pupils are not given enough opportunities to absorb and retain new vocabulary. These issues mean that over time pupils sometimes struggle to remember and articulate what they have learned.

Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Their learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils who are new to the school are quickly made to feel welcome. The school is doing all it can to successfully achieve the highest possible attendance.

The school promotes pupils' wider development well. Pupils talk confidently about equality and how everyone should be treated with respect. Pupils know about and show respect for different faiths. One pupil expressed, 'I don't compete against different religions.' Pupils demonstrate the fundamental British values and know how to stay healthy both physically and mentally. Pupils are proud of the contributions they make to the school. For example, the 'eco warriors' maintain the school garden and talk to pupils about the importance of recycling.

Those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties. They know the school well. They are prepared to question and challenge the work of the school when needed. Staff are positive about the school. They know leaders consider their workload and well-being when decisions are made.

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, teachers do not consistently deliver the curriculum effectively. As a result, some pupils do not develop the same depth of knowledge and understanding as they do in other subjects. The school should ensure that staff have the expertise they need to deliver the curriculum consistently well across subjects. This will help pupils to better secure their knowledge and understanding over time.

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	137114
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10379132
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	611
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tina Alexandrou
CEO of the trust	Lucy Heller
Headteacher	Kate Magliocco
Website	www.arkovalprimary.org
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school is part of Ark Schools, a multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- 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.
- The inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. They also held meetings with members of the governing body and the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, and geography. 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.
- The inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work in other subjects.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys completed by parents, pupils, and staff.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of the school's policies and records, including those related to behaviour, attendance, and pupils' wider development.

Inspection team

Eleanor Ross, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Nicola Crockatt	Ofsted Inspector
Naheeda Maharasingam	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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