

St Peter's London Docks CofE Primary School

Garnet Street, Wapping, E1W 3QT

Inspection dates 23–24 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, fully supported by other leaders and governors, has high expectations of staff and pupils. This has led to improvement in all areas, including teaching and, more recently, achievement.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make at least good progress across the key stages to standards that are broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards are improving and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is increasing in all subjects.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs are all supported extremely well to make at least good progress.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above the national average.
- The early years provision is good and children make good progress.
- Leaders know the school well because they have established rigorous systems for checking on the school's work. They use this information effectively to prioritise plans for further improvement.
- Systems for performance management are rigorous and all staff benefit from high-quality training. This process has improved the quality of teaching, which is typically good, and better in some classes.
- Recently appointed staff are helped to settle quickly and newly qualified teachers are very well supported in their roles.
- The school is welcoming, caring and supportive of pupils from all backgrounds; this has helped to create a cohesive school community.
- Strong personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development is at the heart of the school's success and underpins pupils' good behaviour. Pupils feel safe at school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of what pupils already know to ensure that all groups make maximum progress.
- Support staff are not always involved in pupils' learning from the start of the lesson, slowing the rates of progress.
- More-able pupils are not always challenged enough to fulfil their potential.
- Pupils do not consistently respond to teachers' marking and comments to help them improve their learning. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils in the presentation of their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons, including those focused on physical education. Five of these were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils both informally and formally, including a group of more-able pupils. They heard pupils read and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents, including the 29 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. They also talked to several parents before school and considered the views of staff expressed in 32 questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority's advisory service, the school adviser for London Diocesan Board for Schools, and members of the governing body, including the chair. The inspectors held discussions with members of the senior and extended leadership teams and other staff.
- Inspectors examined pupils' progress information and the work of a randomly selected group of pupils supported by additional funding. In addition, other school documentation, including the governing body minutes, policies and information relating to targets set for teachers and safeguarding, was scrutinised.

Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Olson Davis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's London Docks is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils belong to minority ethnic groups and approximately half speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is twice the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools for pupils who are looked after and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- The school has achieved the Leaders in Parent Partnership Award.
- The school works in partnership with a number of local schools and, in particular, with the local Deanery Partnership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to accelerate progress further across the school, especially for the more able and those pupils supported through additional funding, by making sure that:
 - additional adults support pupils' learning from the start of lessons
 - teachers use the knowledge they have about what pupils can already do and know to ensure that they provide the right level of challenge
 - teachers consistently communicate high expectations for the way that pupils present and complete their work
 - pupils consistently respond to and use the advice in teachers' marking to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is very dedicated and has instilled a strong sense of ambition in the school. She leads the school with a clear vision and is very well supported by a skilled leadership team, a close-knit staff and a committed governing body. There is a strong sense of ambition in the school. This has resulted in improvements in 2014 in the standards that pupils attained by the end of Key Stage 2 in all subjects.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because leaders have not secured typically outstanding teaching across the school. They have not used information about pupils' progress fully to ensure those pupils supported by additional funding achieve as highly as their peers. This is especially the case for those in this group that are capable of attaining the highest levels.
- Middle leaders and managers have a planned programme of professional development. There is already clear evidence of their impact in raising pupils' achievement. They are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses, and play an increasing and effective part in checking pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching.
- Systems for managing teachers' performance are rigorous and effective. The targets set for teachers are based on the Teachers' Standards and the school's self-evaluation. There is a strong focus on improving pupils' progress. All staff benefit from high-quality training which is closely tied to the school's priorities for improvement and individual teachers' personal development. Newly qualified teachers are particularly well supported throughout this process.
- The broad and balanced range of subjects taught meets the requirements of the new National Curriculum. It is well matched to pupils' needs, encouraging both good academic achievement and well-being. Literacy and numeracy are promoted well across all subjects. Subject leaders make sure teachers have the right skills and resources to meet the needs of pupils. Information about the subjects covered is shared with parents and carers on the school's website.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is supported extremely well. There is an extensive range of visits and visitors, and good opportunities for sport and music. The school promotes tolerance and respect for people of all faiths, cultures and lifestyles through a planned programme of assemblies and their religious education programme. British values of democracy and responsibility are encouraged through pupils' active involvement in the democratically elected school council and purposeful discussions about current issues, for example the recent referendum about Scottish Independence.
- The school has used the primary school sports funding to improve the quality of the teaching of physical education. It has increased the opportunities for pupils to prepare for, and take part in, inter-school tournaments and develop their skills in swimming and other sports. The school is aware of the needs of different groups of pupils and tailors the provision to meet their needs. For example, more-able swimmers receive diving lessons. Leaders regularly check the effect of their actions. The impact of the effectiveness of the provision is evident in pupils' increased levels of participation and success, and the low levels of obesity in the school.
- The local authority provides light-touch support as and when required by the headteacher. The school has commissioned additional support from consultants and works very closely with a group of local schools, including those that are outstanding. This has been very effective in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- Links with parents are strong and the vast majority are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The school provides a range of effective opportunities for parents to engage with the school. It supports those parents who may be harder to reach extremely well and, as a result, attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The school has robust safeguarding arrangements and all statutory requirements are met. Staff training in child protection is up to date and very thorough.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors show a keen interest in the school's work and keep themselves very well informed as to how it is doing through regular and focused visits. They are ambitious and bring a wide range of relevant and useful skills to the school. Members attend appropriate training courses., They have a very good understanding of data and how the school is performing compared to other schools nationally. This, together with their good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school, ensures that they can ask questions which challenge and hold the leadership team to account. They ensure that the management of the headteacher's performance is robust through external checks. Governors ensure that the school complies fully with all requirements for safeguarding and protection. They are aware of how additional

funding is spent and its impact on pupils' progress. Governors help to ensure that good decisions are made about allocating finances, including the primary sports funding, and rewarding teachers appropriately for their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, parents and staff agree. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful of each other and adults. They have good attitudes to learning, follow teachers' instructions well and waste very little time when settling down to their learning.
- Pupils treat their environment with respect and inspectors saw no evidence of litter. Playtimes are harmonious and pupils from all backgrounds get on really well with each other. Staff and pupils told inspectors that since the playground has been zoned for different types of play, behaviour has improved at lunchtime. Pupils start the afternoon ready to learn and settle down quickly to their learning.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because in some lessons pupils lose interest when work is not set at the right level and it is either too easy or too hard for them. This slows down their progress. Some pupils do not take enough pride in their work and both their writing and presentation does not reflect what they are capable of.
- School records show that, while a few pupils have difficulties with behaviour, nevertheless they make good progress. This is because the school has a very thorough and supportive approach to behaviour management. The school has only had two fixed-term exclusions in the past three years.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Punctuality has also improved. The school is working hard to support those few families whose children do not always arrive on time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good, and parents agree. Pupils say they feel safe in the school, and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know how to use the internet safely and understand about road and fire safety.
- Pupils know the different kinds of bullying very well but insist that it is rare at school. School records support this and also confirm that any bullying is effectively followed up and dealt with. Pupils have learnt about the dangers of cyber-bullying and what to do should it happen.
- Opportunities within school to take responsibility and links with other schools widen pupils' experiences and raise aspirations. For example, pupils are able to spend the day at several partner independent schools both within and outside of London.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils' books and rates of progress show that teaching is good and continuing to improve.
- Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and feel that they are taught well. They are keen to learn and usually work hard. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson where pupils were learning about using adjectives to describe a character, the activities sustained their interest throughout the lesson. They were eager to answer questions and contribute to their learning. Consequently, they made at least good progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They give clear explanations which enable pupils to start work quickly. The sharpness of teachers' questioning makes pupils think and learn well because it gives them time to share and develop their ideas. In most classes, tasks capture pupils' imagination and sustain interest so that learning is enjoyable and effective.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable and effective role in the learning and progress of less-able pupils, those learning to speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This enables these pupils to make at least good progress both in class and in small groups. However, additional adults are not always effectively deployed at the start of lessons. Consequently, the learning and progress for some pupils slows. For example, in a Reception class in which children were learning how to write individual letters, additional adults waited too long for the teacher's direction before supporting a group who were struggling and an individual child who was finding the task far too easy.
- Evidence from observations and work in pupils' books indicate that work is not always planned to ensure that pupils have enough challenge, and their learning slows. This is especially the case for the more-able pupils. Sometimes, even the tasks perceived as being harder are not challenging enough and do not

enable them to use the knowledge and skills they have learnt.

- Pupils' work shows that teachers' marking of pupils' work has improved over time. However, pupils are not consistently expected to respond to the guidance given on how they can make their work better. Consequently, they do not make as much progress as they could. The quality of presentation and the care that pupils take over their work is too variable throughout the school. The school is currently prioritising how it can improve the quality of writing.
- The school sets homework regularly, including daily reading tasks. Pupils know they are expected to complete them. Parents agree that appropriate homework is set for the age of the pupils.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' work observed during the inspection and the school's own information on pupils' progress confirm that most pupils achieve well from their various starting points.
- On starting Nursery, children's knowledge and skills are often below that which is typical for their age, and many have limited communication and personal and social development skills. Good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables most children to achieve national expectations by the end of Reception. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. The attainment of Year 6 pupils who left school in 2013 was below the national average in reading, well below in mathematics and in line in writing. This represents a decline from the 2012 results. Current school information indicates that this dip has been addressed and a greater proportion of pupils are now reaching the higher levels in all subjects.
- Overall, most pupils in Years 1 to 6 are making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there are some missed opportunities for all pupils and especially for the more able to make outstanding progress. This is because teachers do not always consider what skills and knowledge the pupils already have when planning their work.
- In 2013 and 2014, a large majority of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 check on their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics). However, pupils' achievement in reading in 2013 at the end of Year 6 was below the national average. As a result of an increased emphasis by leaders on reading, the levels pupils reach are rising. Younger pupils demonstrate that they have good strategies for working out how to read unfamiliar words enjoy the daily opportunities to read to an adult. More-able Year 5 and 6 pupils are enthusiastic about the opportunity they have to read regularly to an adult in school. This is helping them to have a better understanding of what they are reading. The school ensures that those pupils who do not have the opportunity to read regularly outside of school are well supported in school.
- The attainment of the most-able pupils is rising, because teachers have higher expectations of them. However, pupils' overall achievement is not yet outstanding because the progress of the most-able pupils is not yet consistent throughout the school, with some groups less likely to achieve the higher levels than others. This is particularly the case for those pupils supported by additional funding.
- The school actively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. Pupils identified as requiring extra help with their work are effectively supported. Consequently, most disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and fulfil their potential. Pupils of differing ethnic backgrounds also make equally good progress.
- Additional funding is used to provide extra staffing and a range of support. The impact of this can be seen in the improving levels reached by eligible pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014. In 2013, the attainment of these pupils was in line with that of similar pupils nationally in all subjects. However, their overall attainment was 10 months behind that of others in the school. School data show an improving picture in 2014, but these pupils are still less likely to attain the higher levels.

The early years provision is good

- Most children, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Staff have high expectations for all children. Activities both inside the classrooms and in the outdoor area promote children's learning well in all of the different areas of learning.
- Children are well supported and there are positive relationships between adults and children. Adults were observed promoting language very well, asking questions that encourage children to think carefully and extend their understanding.
- Additional adults are deployed to support the children's learning and development well, including in their additional languages. They are less effectively deployed during whole-class activities when they are not always engaged with the children's learning quickly enough. Opportunities to support the more-able learners are sometimes missed.
- Children behave well. They are happy to take risks in their learning, which demonstrates that they feel safe. They get on well together and are beginning to share and take turns.
- Relationships with parents are very good. They are involved in the process of checking their child's progress from the outset. There are many opportunities for them to be involved in their child's learning so that they settle quickly and make good progress.
- Careful checks on individuals' progress ensures that appropriate support is put in place in response to need so that individual and groups of pupils make good progress. There are close and effective working relationships with a range of external agencies. The school checks and compares its own judgements with the local authority.
- The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage provides good leadership and management. She understands the strengths and weaknesses. She is well supported by the school's leadership team in developing it further.
- Staff have appropriate training, and safeguarding requirements are all met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100960
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	444243

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Jones
Headteacher	Elizabeth Dickson
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 December 2009
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