

Kentish Town Church of England Primary School

Islip Street, London NW5 2TU

Inspection dates

5–8 December 2017

Overall effectiveness

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outcomes for pupils

Early years provision

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Outstanding

Outstanding

Outstanding

Outstanding

Good

Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership. Along with senior leaders, he has established an inclusive learning community that successfully meets the very broad range of pupils' learning needs. From the most able to those with multiple and complex needs, everyone thrives.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptional. Pupils with complex needs are supported very well. They make significant progress, are confident and play a full part in the life of the school.
- The curriculum provides all pupils with a broad and enriched learning experience. It motivates pupils, develops a deep understanding across subjects and helps them to achieve very well.
- Pupils make very strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Highly effective teaching and well-targeted interventions make sure that every pupil is challenged well.
- Pupils use and apply their literacy and mathematics skills well across subjects. They write in depth across subjects and take pride in their work.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers successfully manage the broad range of learning needs within their classes. They provide challenge at different levels, and have created an environment where pupils push themselves, avoiding taking the easiest route.
- Children in the early years benefit from a strong start to their education. Provision is now excellent in several respects. Children are taught well and are making increasingly good progress. However, in recent years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has been below average. The teaching of phonics insufficiently takes into account the capabilities of the most-able children.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They learn to play together extremely well and live the school's values of tolerance and respect.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They have a strong bond of trust and respect with their teachers. Pupils have a good understanding of rights and responsibilities. They play a full part in ensuring that these are upheld across the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the pace of learning through the early years, particularly in phonics, to accelerate progress of the most able children.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership. He has successfully promoted his vision for a school that ensures that all pupils, irrespective of their individual needs or circumstances, are treated with respect and are able to thrive. The school draws from a diverse community and pupils have a broad range of needs which are very well met.
- Together with senior leaders, the headteacher has created a community where all pupils successfully learn together. Pupils are challenged and supported in equal measure and make outstanding progress. Senior leaders have embedded a culture of success and resilience among pupils. They work with staff to ensure that the needs of every pupil are well known and that everyone goes that extra step to make sure that pupils achieve very well and grow in confidence. Leaders have established a truly remarkable learning experience in the school.
- Leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is exemplary. Pupils with complex needs are supported very well. Specialist therapy and additional speech and language support are provided. Individual one-to-one teaching takes place as appropriate. On the basis of careful planning, teachers and additional adults are well briefed so that support and guidance successfully meet pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that pupils with complex needs are included and supported in classrooms alongside other pupils. Pupils therefore learn with their peers, and have access to the high-quality teaching and challenge available for all. They play a full part in all curriculum activities, including visits to local museums and galleries. This ensures a broad and rich learning experience.
- Parents are very positive about the way their children are treated and supported. The comments of one parent represent the views of many: 'It seems to be the rarest of things, a genuinely inclusive school that serves all its pupils without ever compromising on the highest ambitions and values. The confidence, enthusiasm and team spirit of the staff is remarkable.'
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively and makes sure that pupils achieve very well. The gap between disadvantaged and other pupils has reduced significantly. This is because leaders keep a close eye on the progress made by individual pupils to see if there is a risk of their falling behind. A good range of interventions and additional support helps them overcome gaps in learning. Disadvantaged pupils are given home learning kits with books and resources to help reinforce learning. Music tuition is funded for those disadvantaged pupils who have particular talents. They have full access to the breadth of enrichment activities offered by the school, alongside other pupils.
- The school has an accurate view of its strengths and improvement priorities. Very good systems are in place for managing staff, with highly effective mentoring and support for newly qualified teachers. This is ensuring that they gain access to the professional support and training that they need, so maintaining the consistency of high-quality

teaching. Effective monitoring and feedback are in place to make sure that teachers are clear on what works well and what they can do to improve further.

- A well-planned and enriching curriculum provides all pupils with a broad range of interesting themes and experiences that encourage high achievement. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and show initiative. They research projects at home, creating their own plays, films and presentations, for example, and taking responsibility for displaying and presenting their work. Specialist teaching of physical education and music provides strong opportunities for pupils to succeed and be creative. A further strength of the curriculum is its flexibility in responding to pupils' needs and interests. For example, a recent parent-led focus on the local community, during Black History Month, helped deepen pupils' and teachers' knowledge of the contribution of local people to the development of the community.
- British values are promoted very well. Pupils' rights and responsibilities are central to the school's approach with each class agreeing their own rights and responsibilities with teachers. These are implemented well and provide pupils with a thorough grounding in democracy and accountability.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. The school's strong Christian values encourage pupils to be responsible and to reflect on the values of care and equality. This is complemented by a strong focus on learning about broader cultural and religious beliefs. It leads to all pupils being knowledgeable and respectful of the diversity of the community in which they live.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very supportive of leaders and of the school. They are rigorous in their challenge to make sure that the needs and interests of pupils are met. They are involved in reviewing pupils' progress, and challenge leaders where it is appropriate to do so. Governors make visits to the school to review aspects of its work, reporting back to the whole governing body and discussing what they have seen. This ensures that provision at the school, and its impact on pupils, is kept under review.
- Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively. They attend training regularly. They monitor spending to make sure that additional funding is used wisely.
- Appropriate checks are made to ensure that statutory duties are met regarding safeguarding and the employment of staff. Governors have a strong commitment to making sure that pupils are safe. They work closely with leaders to ensure that risks to the safety of pupils are carefully reviewed and managed well, including risks associated with visits away from the school site. They maintain good relationships with staff and parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A culture of safeguarding and keeping children safe is at the heart of the school. Leaders ensure that arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. All staff are well trained and are kept up to date on safeguarding issues. Staff have a thorough understanding

of the school's safeguarding policy and act swiftly when concerns arise that pupils' safety may be at risk.

- Leaders are persistent in following up any safeguarding concerns, including referrals, to make sure that timely action is taken. There are strong links with external agencies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is very effective in meeting the wide range of pupils' social and learning needs in each class. Teachers have strong subject knowledge across the subjects they teach, and there is specialist teaching of physical education and music. Teachers successfully plan a range of work that provides a high level of challenge for all pupils. They give good guidance and briefings to additional adults working alongside pupils with complex needs. This ensures that pupils succeed and make strong progress.
- Teachers provide challenge at different levels and have successfully involved pupils in recognising what level of challenge is right for them. Pupils respond very positively, pushing themselves and avoiding taking the easiest route. All pupils, including the most able, waste no valuable learning time.
- Supportive and trusting relationships underpin teaching, learning and assessment. Pupils know that their teachers want them to do well. They, in turn, do not want to let their teachers down. Teachers help and guide pupils and give them the tools they need to solve problems on their own. Classrooms are well organised with displays, questions and prompts to help pupils work independently.
- The teaching of mathematics is outstanding. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject. They routinely plan additional challenges to promote reasoning and mathematical thinking. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and work together to apply their mathematical knowledge and reasoning. This works well to build their confidence so that they can overcome any misunderstandings.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils understand the importance of reading both for pleasure and also to find out information. The teaching of phonics is good and provides an appropriate balance between consolidating pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds, and applying this to their reading. Phonics and literacy interventions, led by additional adults, are usually very effective for lower-attaining pupils. Teachers use a good range of literature to capture pupils' interest and to encourage a love of reading. This works well. Pupils speak enthusiastically about wanting to read, and how teachers have motivated them to read.
- Teachers encourage pupils to write in greater depth across subjects, applying what they have learned in English lessons. Excellent outcomes were seen in a range of subjects. For example, pupils write their own plays in history and they research and write up their notes in geography in preparation for class debate. In speaking with a group of pupils about work they took pride in, they made reference to their handwriting, and how they actively refine and edit their work in response to questions and comments. Pupils are keen to improve their work.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are taught very well. They make very good progress from their starting points. Teachers and adults working with them have a clear knowledge of their individual needs, and what they need to learn step by step.

Pupils are challenged in their learning, and in the way they behave. This is done in a very supportive and encouraging way. It builds confidence. Pupils feel valued and achieve success.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have very positive relationships with their teachers and with each other. There is a strong bond and a culture of trust and understanding between pupils and their teachers. This is reinforced through the strong focus across the school on rights and respect, based on the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child. Pupils know that their teachers care for them and that they are committed to protecting their rights and ensuring that everyone is valued equally. Pupils listen to each other and value the contributions of everyone, irrespective of their background or level of need.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to teachers' feedback and genuinely want to do well. Pupils have a very good understanding of British values. They speak confidently about democracy and justice, and treat each other fairly and respectfully. They willingly take on responsibilities.
- Pupils say that the school is a safe place and know whom they can speak to if they have concerns. They know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of how to use computers and the internet without putting themselves in danger.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is impeccable. Pupils play well together. They take responsibility to make sure that any pupils who are on their own are drawn into friendship groups and included. Pupils respond well to the high expectations set for them. They conduct themselves very well around the school. Some pupils with complex needs occasionally present challenging behaviour, but these occasions are managed extremely well. Other pupils are supportive, while maintaining their own focus on learning. They continue to respond positively to the shared values of courtesy and respect for each other.
- Pupils consider that behaviour is very good and that bullying is not an issue in the school. Pupils have confidence that, should misbehaviour occur, such incidents would be dealt with very quickly.
- Due to the complex medical needs of a number of pupils, overall attendance is affected by absence for medical and other specialist treatment. Even so, overall attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Effective action has been taken to reduce persistent absence and to work individually with families. The school has made sure that specialist support is available at school, therefore reducing the need for pupils to attend appointments elsewhere. This has been very successful in halving persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- A higher proportion of pupils than found nationally meet the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, each year. There is particular strength in writing, with an above-average proportion of pupils meeting the greater depth standard. An average proportion of pupils achieve greater depth in reading and in mathematics.
- Progress for all groups of pupils is very strong in all classes and age groups. Disadvantaged pupils make sustained progress over time. Carefully planned interventions and good support in lessons help fill any gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Additional work is organised with families when parents and carers want to improve their own literacy and mathematics skills. This, along with actions to reduce absence, is all contributing to the improved progress disadvantaged pupils make.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make particularly good progress. They develop increasing independence and confidence, and are very well prepared for their next stage in their learning.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below the national average. By the end of Year 2, gaps in phonics knowledge are overcome. However, some younger and most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. They are capable of learning phonics at a greater pace.
- Pupils in all year groups make very strong progress in reading. Pupils read very well. They read accurately, fluently and with understanding, and reflect on what they are reading. Access to a rich variety of literature, along with effective teaching of comprehension, ensures that pupils not only read well but enthusiastically.
- Pupils make very good progress in writing. They show a deep knowledge of different purposes of writing, and use their knowledge well to adapt their style and vocabulary accordingly. Pupils respond well to the feedback they receive. They apply their writing skills successfully in other subjects and research projects.
- Pupils' current progress in mathematics is outstanding across all year groups. All pupils, including the disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, have a very good understanding of number. They use this well to calculate and solve problems. They show good reasoning skills and apply mathematics well in other subjects. Many rise to the mathematical challenges and competitions organised by the school.
- Pupils' outcomes and progress across the wider curriculum are very strong. For example, older pupils develop a good understanding of the historical themes they study. They have regular opportunities to visit museums and galleries, and a local learning centre helps to inspire pupils. These opportunities provide a good focus for pupils to deepen their knowledge and to refine their skills. For example, computing and coding are developed well through regular visits to the learning centre. Pupils learn the skills of playing musical instruments together. Pupils have confidence and speak very positively about their learning across the wider curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well organised and resourced. It provides a stimulating and enriching environment that promotes learning for all children. From the moment children join the Nursery Year, the focus on developing independence and responsibility is at the core of teachers' planning. Consequently, very young children settle quickly into school. They develop a curiosity for learning and the skills they need to be successful and achieve well.
- Children enter the Nursery Year with a broad range of skills and starting points. Overall, their attainment on entry is slightly below average. Some children have complex needs and are part of the school's enhanced learning provision for autistic children. Children are encouraged from the outset to explore and investigate. They show increasing curiosity. They learn to share, to work together and to become increasingly independent.
- Reflecting strong provision, children are now making good progress and, over time, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception is improving rapidly. This has been below average but is now close to the national average. As leaders know, children's achievement should be even higher and this is why provision overall is currently good rather than outstanding.
- Adults are particularly skilled at planning activities that encourage children to learn by exploring through play. They provide a rich experience across all the areas of learning. Teachers and other adults respond to children in a way that extends their thinking. For example, a teacher used effective questioning and support to help two boys playing with a toy motorcycle to develop a road map on a large piece of paper. The boys then developed this into a race track and invented their own game and rules.
- Teachers and other adults have good subject knowledge to support the systematic teaching of phonics. Children begin to apply this knowledge well in their early reading and writing. However, the pace of learning phonics is not brisk enough for the most able children who are already knowledgeable about basic letter sounds.
- Children are safe and happy. Safeguarding is effective. Children quickly learn the values of the school and that everyone is treated equally and fairly. They respond very positively and quickly reflect these values in the way they behave and work with each other.
- Leadership of the early years is relatively new and the early years has had some recent staff changes. However, effective leadership is providing clear support and guidance to build towards outstanding provision. Strong systems for assessing and recording children's progress have been introduced. Parents are actively engaged in contributing to the assessment process by uploading their own observations. Very good relationships are maintained with parents and carers. This helps reinforce learning at home. Parents are very positive about the way their children settle and make progress in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	100034
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10036312

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Peter Anthony
Headteacher	James Humphries
Telephone number	0207 485 1279
Website	www.kentishtown.camden.sch.uk
Email address	head@kentishtown.camden.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than average. It is an aided school with strong links to the local diocese. The school has enhanced provision for autistic children and also for pupils who have physical disabilities.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above average. The proportion identified as having SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The school has a Nursery on one site. Most children in the Nursery progress into Reception classes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was in two parts. Following a short inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, a full inspection under section 5 took place during the same week.
- Inspectors observed learning taking place in all year groups. Observations were undertaken with senior members of the school. Inspectors met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the diocesan office.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss learning and their views on the school.
- Discussions took place with leaders regarding their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and they spoke with pupils in the playground, in lessons and as they moved around the school building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school. They looked at improvement plans, curriculum plans and reviews of the quality of teaching. They also examined school records relating to safety and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of 114 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from informal discussions with parents during the inspection. Inspectors reviewed 28 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 53 responses from pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.
- Inspectors scrutinised books to see what progress pupils make across a range of subjects.

Inspection team

Paul Wagstaff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Joy Barter	Ofsted Inspector
Sean Flood, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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