

Inspection of Orchard Primary School

Holcroft Road, Hackney, London E9 7BB

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 November 2021

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

This school was last inspected seven years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils play well with each other during break times. They enjoy the many activities set up outside. Older pupils engage with and support younger pupils in the playground. They are kind and patient with them. Adults on duty join in with activities and have positive interactions with pupils.

Pupils say bullying is rare and is dealt with seriously by staff. They are safe and taught how to keep safe online. Peers who are elected as digital leaders support them with online safety. Pupils use the 'problem and praise' box in their classroom to report any worries. They can also confide in a trusted adult.

A wealth of extra curriculum activities is on offer for all pupils. Pupils take part in clubs such as chess, karate and gardening. They enjoy school visits and are particularly excited about their residential trips in Year 5 and 6.

Pupils are taught all subjects in the national curriculum. They start to learn Spanish in the nursery and become confident in the language as they move up the school. They can apply to be language ambassadors or class language captains. Pupils enjoy their weekly music lessons. Many pupils choose to join the school choir and have extra lessons in additional instruments such as drumming, violin, guitar and keyboard.

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

The teaching of reading is very strong. School leaders have created a detailed phonics programme. It is taught consistently from Nursery through to Year 2. Pupils falling behind are identified quickly. Staff are then deployed to work with those pupils. Interventions are well planned and pupils make rapid progress. Training for all staff is regular. Experienced teachers model sessions and team-teach with other staff. Staff promote a love of reading across the school. They read daily to their class and expose pupils to high-quality texts. As a result, pupils can talk about their favourite authors and books with enthusiasm.

Leaders have made curriculum design a priority. Their curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They have clearly identified the subject knowledge they want covered. In most subjects, pupils build on this knowledge as they move up the school. Older pupils can refer to learning from previous years. For example, they can remember learning Spanish songs in the Nursery, moving on to numbers in Year 1. They are now writing in full sentences and using conjunctions. In music, new skills and knowledge are taught systematically from early years through to Year 6 in a logical progression. This helps pupils to become confident musicians.

In history, pupils show good understanding. They discuss similarities and differences across periods of time. They make links across topics to larger themes such as invaders. They can give examples of how the Anglo Saxons, Vikings and Romans invaded Britain in different ways. Similar improvements to those made in the history curriculum are now being undertaken in geography. In mathematics, the curriculum also helps pupils to build knowledge over time. In computing, curriculum plans are in place and lessons are well resourced, but teachers are not always clear of the links they need to make to prior learning. As a result, pupils struggle to remember them. Assessment procedures in computing are not as established as they are in other subjects.

Staff are given regular, bespoke professional development. Subject-specific training is delivered in house and through links with the other federation schools. Expectations are high for all pupils and staff. Leaders have structures in place to support well-being. Despite this, some said that they struggle with workload and report being overwhelmed. Leaders, including governors, do not always act quickly enough to implement support for individuals where need is identified.

Pupils' behaviour is well managed. The school's behaviour policy and systems are followed consistently by all adults. Leaders keep detailed behaviour logs which are regularly analysed. Support is put in place for pupils who need it, including those with SEND. Most pupils behave well in class. Some pupils, however, disrupt learning for others. Adults have to remind them of the expectations and encourage them to focus on their work. Leaders have embedded rigorous attendance systems which have improved over all attendance for pupils.

In early years, a range of quality activities are planned for every day. Appropriate risk-taking activities support children in their physical development, as well as their confidence. Children are encouraged to be independent and forge positive relationships with their peers. Older pupils apply for many responsibilities across the school. Leaders place great importance on gathering the views of pupils. An extensive list of clubs and trips are on offer and are very well attended. Themed weeks such as 'family' and 'enterprise' week promote community spirit.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, make sure all staff receive regular training and updates. The culture of safeguarding is well embedded, and staff identify and report concerns immediately. They are aware of what signs they should look out for. Leaders have thorough processes in place. They work effectively with outside agencies to provide the best support for the pupils and their families.

Safer recruitment guidelines are followed rigorously. School leaders understand the risks pupils face in the local community. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and are regularly updated on how to keep safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have provided clear intent for all curriculum subjects. Most subjects identify the end points to be reached by pupils, and assessment routines are made explicit to teachers. This is not the case in every subject. In computing, for example, teachers cannot confidently tell how much pupils know and remember. Pupils are not able to articulate their learning and how it has built up over time. Leaders must ensure that assessment opportunities are established and effective in all subjects.
- Leaders have extremely high expectations for all staff. However, notwithstanding support structures in place, some struggle with workload and feel overwhelmed. Although leaders have identified these concerns, they have not been addressed quickly enough. In consultation with staff, leaders should take effective action to reduce unnecessary workload.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100234
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10210144
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	676
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Gowland
Headteacher	Acting Headteacher Aimee Walker
Website	www.orchard.hackney.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. It has grown into a three-form entry school. It is part of the Viridis Schools Federation of three schools.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND and with education, health and care plans is above average.
- Some children in the nursery attend part time and some full time.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders from the school. They met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. A phone call was made with the local authority school improvement partner.

- Inspectors met pupils to understand their views on the school.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages, music and computing. As part of the part of the deep dives, inspectors met with leaders to discuss curriculum plans, visited lessons with senior leaders, met with teachers, and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the well-being and behaviour of pupils during lesson visits and around the school. They observed pupils as they arrived at school in the morning.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with leaders, teachers and support staff. They looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors spoke to most of the staff about their workload and well-being. They considered staff responses to the Ofsted survey. They also looked at the parent and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide of documentation provided by the school. This included the school improvement plan, school evaluation, curriculum documentation and school policies.

Inspection team

Aliki Constantopoulou, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rosemarie Kennedy	Ofsted Inspector
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