

Buttercup Primary School

181 Cannon Street Road, London E1 2LX

Inspection dates

4–6 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have failed to check rigorously the school's compliance with the independent school standards and statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have had an inflated view of the school's effectiveness. These failings arise because leaders have been too dependent on external advice.
- The proprietors have not challenged leaders effectively since disbanding the governing body in 2015. Some areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have not been addressed.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils are safe. The management and mitigation of risks is poor. Clear procedures are not in place for staff to report specific safeguarding allegations, should they arise.
- Checks on visiting speakers fail to ensure that they do not promote partisan views.
- Leadership of teaching has not improved. Teachers plan for but do not consistently meet the different needs and aptitudes of pupils. As a consequence, pupils make inconsistent progress across subjects and classes.
- Too few of the most able pupils achieve as well as they should, especially in mathematics and science.
- Leaders do not analyse the school's information sharply enough to improve pupils' attainment, progress or attendance.
- Senior leaders are not quick or effective enough at dealing with rare instances of serious misbehaviour that occur.
- Initial assessments for children in the early years are not detailed enough. Teachers have an inflated view of what children are achieving at the end of the Reception class.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by a range of visits beyond the school.
- Pupils sing enthusiastically. They show self-confidence and enjoyment when singing together.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve safeguarding procedures so that the school promotes pupils' safety, by:
 - ensuring that all staff clearly understand their responsibilities and the school's procedures for safeguarding children
 - publishing the current safeguarding policy for parents
 - ensuring that the school's safeguarding procedures are compliant with statutory guidance and legislation
 - ensuring that all staff take responsibility for their role in reducing risks around the school building and beyond
 - putting in place robust procedures to check that visitors contributing to the life of the school will present non-partisan views
 - ensuring that such visitors contribute to pupils' understanding of British values.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school consistently meets all the independent school standards
 - leaders' evaluation of teaching and the school's overall effectiveness are based on recent and accurate evidence of pupils' progress and attainment
 - senior leaders regularly review the progress and attendance of key groups at the school
 - plans for improving the school enable leaders to measure if developments are improving pupils' progress and attainment
 - leaders at all levels challenge each other to drive the school's improvement priorities and reduce dependence on external support
 - senior leaders investigate and deal with the rare instances of serious misbehaviour quickly and effectively
 - pupils' interest and motivation from educational visits is used to promote their classroom learning.
- Improve teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes by ensuring that teachers:
 - take account of the different needs and abilities of pupils in their classes
 - enable the most able pupils to develop a greater depth in their learning, for example by applying their knowledge in new contexts, particularly in mathematics and science
 - ensure that all pupils consistently present their work to the highest standards, including by applying the school's handwriting expectations
 - provide time for pupils to regularly review and overcome difficulties in their learning
 - develop pupils' ability to think and justify opinions, particularly in mathematics and science
 - check that pupils understand reading material, especially when they misread words in class

- share good practice between classes, so that progress is improved across all subjects
- provide opportunities for pupils to develop further their problem-solving skills so they can apply their secure arithmetic in more challenging mathematics and science work.
- Leaders and staff should improve behaviour, by:
 - working with pupils to reduce further the small number of instances of misbehaviour outside of lessons
 - working with pupils to ensure that there are fewer occasions when they need reminding to walk and behave calmly around school
 - developing pupils’ depth of understanding about bullying in all its forms, such as racial, homophobic and cyber bullying
 - deepening pupils’ understanding and respect for people with protected characteristics
 - tackling more quickly instances of off-task behaviour during learning activities.
- Improve the early years provision, by:
 - reviewing and developing the accuracy of assessments made about children’s development and learning
 - ensuring that there is a wide range of evidence to support teachers’ ongoing assessments of children in early years and Nursery
 - ensuring that teachers consider and plan fully for children’s differing physical development needs when playing outdoors
 - ensuring that staff consistently expect children to apply their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) when reading
 - delivering learning activities to meet the needs of individuals and groups.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3 and 3(a))
 - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account when planning lessons (paragraph 3 and 3(d)).
- The proprietor must ensure that leaders consistently encourage respect for other people, playing particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act. (paragraph 5 and 5(b)(vi)).
- Preclude the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school (paragraph 5 and 5(c)).
- The proprietor must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political views are brought to the attention of pupils, that they are offered a balanced

presentation of opposing views (paragraph 5, 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii) and 5(d)(iii)).

- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school complies with relevant health and safety laws by implementing the health and safety policy effectively (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by ensuring that the premises risk assessments are conducted regularly and that the appropriate actions are taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school's current safeguarding policy, pupils' academic performance during the preceding year and current complaints procedure are available for parents on the school's website (paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c), 32(3), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 33 and 33(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently, fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and actively promote the well-being of pupils by protecting them from harm (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school meets the statutory framework requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
 - Ensure that the school's safeguarding policy and practice effectively implements Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and the Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The proprietors and senior leaders have failed to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards. During the inspection senior leaders worked to meet a number of unmet standards. This included ensuring that the medical room had in-date and sterile first aid equipment, updating policies to meet requirements, and ensuring the single central record of pre-appointment checks was accurate. Nevertheless, a number of standards relating to safeguarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils remain unmet.
- Senior leaders have failed to act successfully on a number of areas for improvement identified during the previous full inspection in December 2014. At that time, inspectors found leaders needed to analyse pupils' progress and attainment more closely. This is still the case. Senior leaders do not consider all key groups when analysing the outcomes or attendance of pupils; these include, for example, disadvantaged pupils, pupils at differing stages of learning English as an additional language and the most able. Consequently, leaders' evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment is too broad and overgenerous.
- Leaders admit that they have remained highly dependent on the views of external consultants and that this has contributed to their overly positive view of the school. Prior to this inspection, leaders believed the school was outstanding.
- Leaders have spent too little time gathering all available evidence about the school's effectiveness. For example, when judging the effectiveness of teaching, they have relied too heavily on lesson observations, which provide only a snapshot of teaching. Leaders have given too little attention to pupils' views, ongoing classwork and evidence of progress from periodic assessments. Leaders have not accurately explored information on pupils' attainment and progress to analyse the performance of different groups. These include the most able, the disadvantaged, the most able disadvantaged or those at different stages of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have failed to make regular reviews of the school's plans for improvement. Too often, it is unclear how leaders know if their work to improve the school has been successful. Leaders do not ensure that improvement planning identifies clearly who is responsible for developments. They do not identify explicitly how they will hold each other to account to ensure rapid improvement in pupils' learning and safety.
- Senior leaders' overgenerous evaluation of the school's work means their plans for improvement lack focus in the areas that truly require rapid improvement, including the unmet independent school standards.
- Senior leaders have put in place a process of performance management for staff. However, targets are too broad and generic to drive improvements in the school. Similarly, the programme of continuing professional development for staff has not addressed key issues including standards of behaviour and pupils' welfare. It has failed to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school.
- Leaders have not ensured that they monitor pupils' behaviour consistently and rigorously. A few pupils told inspectors that there are occasions when pupils are verbally threatening or physical with each other. Leaders do not investigate such behaviour quickly or

thoroughly enough. This, together with weak record-keeping, limits their ability to promote the welfare of pupils.

- The proprietors have not ensured that support staff, teachers or middle and senior leaders share the good practice that exists in the school. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has remained variable across the school since the previous inspection and identified strengths such as pupils' behaviour have declined.
- The school's regular educational visits enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the school works with a legal firm, helping pupils learn to solve a 'fairy tale crime'; this activity helped pupils develop a better understanding of the English legal system and the police. However, teachers do not routinely link follow-up work to these enrichments and this reduces their impact on pupils' learning.

Governance

- The governance of the school is inadequate. The proprietors disbanded the governing body in 2015. Consequently, the joint proprietors – one of whom is also the headteacher – are now solely responsible for governance at the school.
- The proprietors have paid insufficient attention to ensuring that the independent school standards are met. Proprietors do not have a deep understanding of what is required to meet the standards. As a result, there are a range of unmet standards, which pose a risk to the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Leaders were unaware of any unmet standards prior to the inspection. However, leaders acknowledged and accepted the unmet standards as identified by inspectors during the inspection.
- The proprietors have not maintained a careful overview of the standards achieved in the school. They were overly dependent on the views of external consultancy, as shown in a recent 'mock inspection'. Consequently, proprietors had a poor understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have not checked their statutory responsibilities sharply enough. For example, the inspection identified a large number of administrative errors in the school's single central record of pre-employment checks on staff.
- Along with senior leaders, the joint proprietors have failed to ensure that the school has addressed the areas identified for improvement in December 2014. Consequently, the school has declined in effectiveness since the previous inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The school does not have a culture of actively identifying and mitigating risks to protect the welfare of pupils.
- The proprietors have failed to ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust. For example, staff were unaware of how to make an allegation against the headteacher should they need to do so. Furthermore, both the safeguarding policy and the complaints procedure told parents and staff to report concerns to the chair of the governing body. As the governing body was disbanded in 2015 and there is no longer a chair of the governing body, this means that there is no appropriate procedure in place.
- Leaders have failed to ensure that potential hazards to pupils' safety are thoroughly risk-assessed. They have not reduced the risk of potential harm to their pupils around the premises or on their visits beyond the school. For example, pupils could gain easy access to the school's staff kitchen area through a bookcase in a classroom. Inspectors found

flammable and toxic substances including white spirit, bleach, paint, and cleaning detergents located next to a gas cooker and within reach of pupils. Risk assessments such as those for daily visits to the local recreation ground are generic and not updated. These oversights demonstrate an overly casual approach to assessing risk and undermine the safeguarding of pupils.

- Until this year, the school has had inadequate vetting procedures in place for visitors taking assemblies and entering the school building. Leaders failed to check visitors' backgrounds, their views, or the materials they would share with pupils. Consequently, leaders were unable to ensure that visitors would uphold the school's ethos or ensure the non-promotion of partisan views. Leaders check that visitors have enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service. However, they accept that they have poor oversight with regard to visitors' publically stated beliefs or the materials they will use in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching and assessment are inconsistent across the school. Leaders have not ensured that teaching meets the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly the most able. Teachers do not make enough use of their information about pupils' attainment. Pupils learn in mixed-age classes and too often teachers do not challenge the most able to achieve the highest standards.
- Although some teaching allows pupils to extend their thinking, for example by explaining or justifying their ideas, this is not consistent across the school or subjects. In personal, social and health education, pupils explain their opinions about staying healthy. They also learn about the world of work and, with teachers' help, apply this learning in other subjects. However, in mathematics and science teachers do not expect pupils to explain and expand their thinking. Therefore, too few pupils acquire a depth of learning in these subjects throughout the school.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils consistently apply their best handwriting across the curriculum or carry out mathematical calculations systematically.
- Teachers help pupils to improve their work and develop their knowledge and skills in some subjects, but not all. For example, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to redraft stories after feedback, and to build up a range of sketches before drawing a picture. Consequently, art and writing skills are strengths for many pupils. However, teachers do not consistently provide pupils with opportunities to overcome difficulties in mathematics or science.
- Teachers help pupils to develop a secure understanding of arithmetic, subtraction, multiplication and division. However, at times the work set by teachers is too easy, with pupils repeating work they have already mastered. Pupils' ability to solve mathematical problems is not developed consistently well across the school, with few opportunities in some classes.
- Suitable attention is given to the teaching of basic reading skills in class and reading is also promoted at other times, including at breakfast club and at morning break. However, teachers could do more to ensure that pupils always understand the meaning of the texts they are reading.

- Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their ability to sing and dance. Pupils enjoy singing in assembly and dancing in lessons. They demonstrate a keen awareness of pitch and rhythm and can sing with control and expression. Pupils told inspectors that staff teach them singing regularly and that is an enjoyable part of their school day.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. Procedures to keep pupils safe are ineffective. Leaders have not ensured that they assess and reduce risks to pupils during their time in school. For example, they have not ensured that staff have systems in place to register attendance at the before-school club, or that there are no hazards, such as combustible materials in the school stairwell.
- Pupils relate well to each other. Boys and girls work and socialise together with confidence.
- Pupils have a basic understanding of democracy and participate in elections for their school council. Councillors meet regularly and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils understand the role of democratic representatives and readily take issues to their councillors. For example, pupils recently complained about the state of the school toilets. Councillors took action by appointing pupils to monitor the school toilets during social times to ensure that they are clean and tidy.
- By Year 6, pupils understand how the school prepares them for the next stage of their education and for the world of work. One element of this is 'work experience' in a place of work for one day. However, leaders acknowledge that risk assessments for these visits insufficiently identify hazards and that improvement in this respect is a priority before undertaking these experiences in the future.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection understood how Islam is similar to and different from other world religions such as Christianity, Sikhism and Judaism. This supports their understanding of British values, such as tolerance and mutual respect.
- Pupils understand that bullying comes in different forms. They know how to stay safe from physical, verbal and emotional bullying. However, they have a more limited understanding of racial, homophobic and cyber bullying.
- Leaders have failed to ensure that pupils develop an understanding and respect for people who have protected characteristics. (Protected characteristics are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation.)

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well around school, though there are occasions when they need reminding to walk and to behave calmly. Pupils told inspectors that there are some occasions when people hit and kick each other. They have confidence in staff to sort these issues out and, overall, they feel safe in school. However, the school's own records show that more serious incidents, though rare, are not dealt with quickly or

effectively by senior leaders.

- Pupils generally behave well in their lessons. However, when work is either too easy or too hard some pupils lose concentration. This shows in their work: at times it is presented poorly and mistakes are scribbled carelessly out. Teachers are not quick enough to challenge this behaviour.
- Attendance is broadly average when compared with all primary schools nationally. It is impossible to draw any further evaluation about pupils' attendance. Leaders do not regularly analyse patterns for groups or the overall school. For example, no attendance information for the summer term was available for the school or groups. In some year groups, no attendance information was available for the spring term of this academic year.
- Pupils have playtime at the local community recreation ground. They walk there sensibly and behave appropriately during this social time. Pupils play together sensibly, regardless of gender or age.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress and attainment require improvement. Although some pupils make good progress, particularly in reading, writing and art, others do not because they are not provided with work that builds on their prior learning. Work scrutiny across subjects and year groups shows that pupils make inconsistent progress across the curriculum.
- Expectations of pupils have been too low. In particular, some of the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not make good progress, particularly in mathematics and science. There are too few opportunities for them to apply their learning in new or different contexts. Therefore, they are not attaining the standards of which they are capable. Almost no pupils attain a greater level of depth in their learning by the end of key stages 1 or 2.
- Children in the early years make variable progress in reading. This is because staff do not consistently help pupils to apply their phonic knowledge when reading in class. Equally, in key stage 2, teachers do not always correct pupils when they misread a word. Staff do not consistently ensure that pupils understand the reading books they are exploring. However, pupils enjoy reading and have access to a range of fiction and non-fiction books at school.
- In 2016, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with national expectations at the end of key stages 1 and 2. This is currently the case across Year 1 to Year 6.
- The school's information about pupils' outcomes does not show how well different groups of pupils perform. There is some information about the attainment of boys and girls, which shows little variation in achievement. However, there is no analysis about the progress or attainment of disadvantaged pupils, the most able or pupils who need to catch up.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The leadership and management of the early years is inadequate. This is due to the leaders not meeting the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage regarding safeguarding and welfare of children in the early years. For example, leaders failure to ensure there were appropriate vetting procedures for visitors leading assemblies for children.
- Initial assessments of children's skills are weak. Leaders have failed to ensure that these assessments are based on a depth of evidence. For example, leaders believed that children begin Nursery with skill levels typically well below those for their age. However, inspectors found that this was not accurate. In particular, a small proportion started school with skill levels above those typical for their age.
- Teachers plan learning activities for the whole of the early years without taking into account children's varied starting points. Consequently, children do not achieve depth in their learning, particularly the most able children in the Reception class.
- Leaders asserted that nine in every 10 children would achieve a good level of development this academic year. Inspectors found insufficient evidence to support the accuracy of such an assessment.
- Leaders have not developed the early years' assessment system. This was a key area of development at the time of the last inspection. It remains a priority for the school.
- Children play well together. The early years classroom is a harmonious environment. A range of activities from across the early years curriculum engages children in learning.
- Staff consider the views of parents during the academic year. However, insufficient evidence is obtained from parents about their children's learning prior to starting Nursery.
- The early years has no on-site outdoor space. Children are required to walk to the local recreation ground for physical activity. They do this sensibly, but these sessions do not provide a consistent level of challenge for the differing needs in children's physical development.

School details

Unique reference number	138564
DfE registration number	211/6003
Inspection number	10034697

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Number of part-time pupils	27
Proprietor	Neyarun Nessa Rena Begum
Headteacher	Rena Begum
Annual fees (day pupils)	£0–£7,800
Telephone number	020 375 97408
Website	www.buttercupprimary.co.uk
Email address	info@buttercupprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–4 December 2014

Information about this school

- Buttercup Primary School opened in 2012. It is an Islamic day school that caters for pupils aged from three to 11 years. The school is housed over three floors in a building alongside shops and businesses. There is no outdoor space on the school site. Daily use is made of local outdoor provision.
- There are currently 137 pupils on roll, 27 of whom are in the early years class. Children in the early years attend part time for either morning or afternoon sessions. There are four mixed-age classes across the school.
- Pupils come from a range of cultural backgrounds, including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Somali and North African heritages. Almost all pupils are from Muslim backgrounds. Most

pupils speak at least two languages, including English. None of the pupils are considered to be at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language.

- The school's vision states, 'the Muslim values, principles and standards lie at the heart of our education alongside a strong recognition of world faiths and the multicultural society in which we live'.
- There are currently no pupils who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities on roll.
- The previous full inspection of the school took place in December 2014. This inspection found that there were unmet independent school standards. In September 2015, Ofsted conducted a progress monitoring inspection to check on the school's progress towards meeting all the independent school standards. That inspection found that the school was meeting the previously unmet standards.
- Following the progress monitoring inspection in September 2015, the joint proprietors disbanded the school's governing body. Consequently, two joint proprietors, one of whom is the headteacher of the school, are responsible for the governance of the school.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education. It was conducted without notice.
- The lead inspector toured the school premises with the headteacher in order to check compliance with the independent school standards. However, during the inspection Her Majesty's Inspector identified a staff kitchen area. This area presented with a number of unmet independent standards.
- Inspectors visited an assembly, the before-school breakfast club and morning registration.
- Inspectors visited all classes and reviewed pupils' workbooks from across the school's curriculum.
- An inspector listened to pupils read. Pupils explained to the inspector their opinions on books, authors and genre.
- Inspectors met with one of the joint proprietors, senior leaders, class teachers responsible for leading areas of learning and the early years leader.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtime. Inspectors held more formal meetings with pupils from across the school and met separately with the school council.
- An inspector met parents informally as they collected their children from school. There were too few responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, to make analysis possible. Inspectors considered the school's own survey of parents.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including policies, behaviour records, the single central record, curriculum and planning documents, appraisal records for staff, the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress, and risk assessments.
- The school's website was scrutinised to confirm that the required policies and documents were available for parents. The website was not compliant with the independent school standards.
- Pages three to five of this inspection report details the independent school standards that were not met at the end of the inspection. Senior leaders resolved a number of other independent school standards that were unmet at the start of the inspection. Leaders believed all compliance standards were met prior to this inspection.

Inspection team

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