

Ark Paddington Green Primary Academy

Park Place Villas, London W2 1ND

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, governors and the trust have worked highly effectively to make significant improvements to the school since it became an academy.
- They have designed a relevant and inspiring curriculum that develops pupils' skills and knowledge and fosters a strong understanding of equality and diversity.
- The quality of staff training and development is exemplary. This made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- There is a lot of good work focusing on language development. However, teachers do not always check that pupils understand all the new words they come across.
- The teaching of phonics is exemplary. However, lower ability pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not have a sufficient grasp of reading strategies to help them fully understand what they are reading.
- Routines and systems are used consistently well to ensure that lessons proceed smoothly.
- Leaders' robust approach to improving attendance has been very successful. Attendance rates have risen, so that they are above the national average.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are thoughtful and courteous and have excellent interpersonal skills.
- The quality of the work leaders do to foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Leaders' work to keep pupils safe is highly effective. Pupils and parents and carers agreed unanimously that children feel safe at Ark Paddington.
- Leaders have been very successful in engaging parents in their children's learning. The most recent parents' evening had 100% attendance.
- A focus on staff development in early years means that the proportion of children ready for Year 1 has risen.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further, by ensuring that:
 - lower ability pupils, including those with SEND, have a range of strategies to draw upon when reading unfamiliar words, so that their reading fluency improves and they can answer more complex questions about a text
 - teachers check that pupils have a clear understanding of the higher level vocabulary to which they are exposed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Since joining the academy, leaders from within the school and across the trust have worked tirelessly to improve outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to, for example, higher proportions reaching the expected standard at the end of each key stage.
- Staff, including leaders, governors and members of the trust, work as a cohesive and committed team. This is one of the great strengths of the school.
- Excellent relationships are at the core of the school's success. Staff greet pupils at the beginning of every day with a handshake and warm words of welcome, which sets a really positive tone for the day.
- Staff are extremely respectful of each other. The way in which leaders approach staff development is highly collaborative. Staff, therefore, are really keen to hone their craft and seek feedback and guidance.
- The approach to developing staff's expertise is highly effective. There is a continuous focus on ensuring that staff are really secure in their understanding of how children learn.
- Staff at the early stages of their career spoke with great enthusiasm about the excellent support they receive.
- Leaders, governors and representatives of the trust are acutely aware of the school's strengths, how far it has come on its journey of development, and what remains to be done. They prioritise judiciously and use all the resources available to them, including support from across the trust, to ensure that they meet their goals.
- The curriculum is a real strength of the school. It has been redesigned so that there are clear threads of learning that not only cross subject boundaries but also explore universal themes, such as the moral dimensions of the First and Second World Wars as a lever to explore democracy and dictatorship. The new curriculum is full of big ideas and pupils have responded with great interest. For example, the current Year 6 theme is 'What is trust?'
- Leaders know what they want the curriculum to achieve in terms of ensuring that pupils leave the school with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in the next phase of their education. Leaders support staff to deliver the curriculum in a consistent way that ensures equality of opportunity because pupils quickly learn the rules and expectations that allow them to be successful from one year to the next.
- Leaders' ambition for pupils is reflected in the curriculum; the idea of going to university is presented as the norm. For example, each class is named after the university that its teacher attended. There is also a residential trip planned to one of the most prestigious universities in the country.
- The quality of leaders' work in fostering pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The curriculum provides myriad opportunities for thinking about moral and ethical issues. For example, when learning about refugees and migrants, pupils think about what makes people find the courage to take action, and

when learning about explorers such as Shackleton, pupils debate whether hope can sustain us. This leads to pupils who have a solid understanding of equality and celebrate diversity. They are outraged by the idea that someone might suggest that girls cannot play football and instinctively understand that you would never make negative comments about a physical disability.

- Leaders promote values well, including British values. Pupils often quote the school values when talking about, for example, how they approach their work or why they believe courtesy and kindness are important. Leaders foster an awareness of democracy through the election of class ambassadors and school council representatives. Pupils understand the work of the Mayor of London's office in, for example, tackling air pollution in the city.
- Leaders use the pupil premium grant really well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress, so that gaps in attainment between them and their non-disadvantaged peers nationally are closing. The funding is used to ensure that these pupils' needs are optimally met, for example on counselling and guidance services, to develop teachers' skills in meeting their academic needs, on breakfast club places and for subsidising school trips that enhance the curriculum.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used highly effectively to encourage pupils to take up a healthy lifestyle and ensure that the teaching of PE is of a very high calibre.
- The work leaders do to engage parents in school life and in their children's learning is outstanding. Leaders give parents comprehensive information and practical ideas on how to support their children at home, as well as outings and places to visit that relate to the curriculum. All the parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey would recommend the school to others.

Governance of the school

- Governors and representatives of the trust are highly knowledgeable and effective in their roles. They play an active role in school improvement; for example, they were present during several external reviews so that they could hear first-hand messages about the quality of education the school was providing. They have a strong understanding of the particular issues faced by this school and its community.
- They are extremely effective in discharging their duties around safeguarding, supporting leaders to tackle issues specific to the school's context. Governors and representatives of the trust ensure that there is an ongoing spotlight on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, challenging leaders to show that they spend the pupil premium funding in the best possible way so as to maximise its impact. They provide robust challenge to school leaders, but offer effective support in equal measure. In this way they are invaluable to the school's success.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Procedures are clear, and staff at all levels understand how to report any concerns they might have. The suitability of staff to work with children is carefully checked. Records

of this, and other safeguarding matters, are well kept.

- Procedures for administering first aid and responding to pupils with medical needs are thorough. Leaders ensure that there are staff with first-aid training at key points across the school and in the playground, so that any medical incidents can be dealt with swiftly.
- Where pupils need further or more specialist support, leaders refer to external agencies in a timely manner. Relationships with these agencies are very positive. In this way, leaders ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Phonics is taught exceptionally well. All staff use consistently effective techniques and have strong subject knowledge. This leads to well above average outcomes in Year 1.
- The most able readers choose books that have a good level of challenge for them and are confident in answering a range of questions on what they have read. Readers of average ability are also able to answer comprehension questions well. They read fluently and choose texts at the appropriate level. They all show a real enthusiasm for reading. However, some lower ability pupils and those with SEND are not confident in using strategies to help them when they get stuck on an unfamiliar word. Pupils who read with inspectors would just stop at a word they found difficult and needed prompting to use their phonics skills. They were often unable to suggest any alternative strategies. This impeded their fluency and understanding.
- Routines and systems are well embedded. Teachers use a consistent approach in lessons. This means that pupils are completely clear about expectations and respond to instructions, which are supplemented with signs and gestures, without hesitation. This allows lessons to proceed really smoothly, so learning time is maximised and transitions between activities are seamless.
- High expectations and fidelity to the behaviour scheme ensure that there is excellent conduct in all classes, so learning can proceed with no disruptions.
- Leaders have established systems that enable pupils to show teachers how well they understand and are paying attention. For example, pupils use different hand gestures to show that they agree with, have something to add to, or want to challenge, what their classmates are saying. This shows teachers they are listening and enables teachers to extend pupils' thoughts.
- Teachers are very quick at spotting misconceptions in lessons. This means that they can tackle these misconceptions immediately and so clarify pupils' understanding.
- There is a strong focus on subject-specific terminology. For example, pupils learn the correct scientific terms for different parts of a plant. They are then expected to use these terms correctly in their writing. Work seen in books shows that pupils are confident in this. However, more general work on developing vocabulary is not always as successful. For example, pupils were writing words such as 'knowledgeable' and 'quick-witted' in their books, but were unable to explain what these meant.
- Teachers use the newly implemented schemes of work to develop strong links between writing and other subjects. For example, as part of a topic on Fair Trade, pupils who

were reading 'Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory' wrote letters in an English lesson to Willy Wonka, urging him to consider using only ethically sourced cocoa. Links were also made to mathematics, when pupils calculated the financial implications of using Fair Trade products versus other brands.

- Parents are very happy with the teaching at the school. All the parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children are taught well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very confident learners. They work with tremendous concentration. Pupils who spoke to inspectors could articulate their learning really clearly. For example, when a visitor enters a class, the class ambassadors come up and greet them, shake their hands and explain what the class is currently working on.
- Relationships across the school are very strong. The morning greeting from staff results in pupils who are confident in sustaining eye contact, shaking hands and making appropriate small talk with strangers as well as each other.
- Pupils have a high level of respect for each other's ideas. This is exemplified in the way they make a range of hand gestures to show that they agree or want to challenge or expand upon what a classmate, or indeed teacher, has said. When questioned, they can give excellent, detailed reasons for supporting or challenging the comments they have heard.
- Pupils take pride in their work. They follow the advice they are given on how to set out their books, which helps them to present their work well.
- Pupils are really proud of their learning and their school. Older pupils recognise all the changes that have taken place in the last two years and feel really lucky to be at such a good school.
- Pupils are really clear that they have a range of options if they feel concerned about anything. They can refer themselves to the school's counselling service, telephone the NSPCC or simply confide in a teacher.
- Pupils are happy at school. They recognise that sometimes someone may feel lonely in the playground, but that this would always be resolved by another offering to include them. Pupils say that their friends would always look out for them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying, including cyber bullying. Most pupils said that there is no bullying in the school. All the pupils inspectors spoke to were confident that adults would deal with any incidents promptly and effectively.
- Pupils feel very safe at school. They have a sound understanding of how to remain safe online. They explain that they would tell an adult if they came across any content or games that were 'not appropriate'. They appreciate the work the school does to teach them how to stay safe, for example through the recent visit from the NSPCC.
- There is a range of sporting opportunities, such as daily running, lunchtime activities

including skipping, table tennis and football, after-school clubs and high-quality PE teaching. All these contribute strongly to pupils' understanding of the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle. On both days, inspectors saw pupils actively choosing healthy options from the lunchtime menu.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The playground is a happy and industrious place. Pupils show excellent manners in the lunch hall and around the school. They naturally open doors, offer to tidy up each other's plates and say 'please' and 'thank you' as a matter of course.
- There is a very clear behaviour policy, based on positive rewards. Pupils understand it and say that because of it, behaviour is greatly improved on what it was like before.
- There are very few incidents of poor behaviour because the behaviour system provides pupils with the structure and incentives to behave well. On the rare occasions that pupils display poor behaviour, they are encouraged to think about the consequence of their actions. This helps them to modify their behaviour in the future. This means that there are rarely any exclusions.
- Leaders emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality. They are very proud of the fact that attendance figures last year rose to above the national average for the first time. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is much lower than the national figure.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Very high proportions of pupils reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- Pupils make at least good progress in reading and writing across key stage 2. Proportions reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 rose to above average in 2018. Work in English books shows that pupils from different starting points are developing secure knowledge. There are many and varied opportunities to write across the curriculum, which further strengthens pupils' writing skills.
- Mathematics is a strength. Attainment at the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 has been above average for the last two years. Pupils leaving Year 6 in 2017 and 2018 made progress that was well above average. Current pupils' mathematics books show very strong arithmetic skills and the opportunity to apply these skills to solve real-life problems.
- Pupils make good progress to acquire important skills in a range of subjects. The curriculum is set up in such a way as to ensure that pupils learn to think like historians, geographers and scientists. The work in their books in these subjects shows that they take great interest, apply themselves well and understand the content of the topics they study. Pupils talk with pride and excitement about learning a musical instrument.
- Outcomes are good for disadvantaged pupils. They make strong progress, particularly across key stage 2. In 2018, their progress in reading, writing and mathematics was

well above that of other pupils nationally. This is due to adults having high expectations of them and the opportunity to practise key skills until they master them.

- Pupils who are learning English as an additional language acquire it at a good pace because of the focus on technical vocabulary and the expectation that everyone should speak in full sentences.

Early years provision

Good

- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of Reception rose sharply in 2018 to above the national average for the first time.
- Leaders have got an accurate view of the strengths within early years. They are equally precise in identifying areas for development.
- Leaders have taken effective action to train staff, which has led directly to improvement in the quality of teaching and in raised standards.
- There is a strong focus on language development, which supports the large numbers of children who start school with a limited knowledge of English. During structured play, adults regularly model relevant language related to the resources at hand. During the inspection, inspectors heard children echoing this: 'One, two, three bricks'; 'Let's put one more.' Staff expect and encourage children to speak in full sentences.
- The learning environment is well laid out and provides opportunities to learn across the curriculum, both inside and outside, which children are keen to avail themselves of.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning. They are engaged and motivated in their learning. They listen carefully to each other and are very keen to answer questions.
- Children behave well. They show kindness and quickly learn how to share and take turns.

School details

Unique reference number	143148
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	10067632

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ann Ewing
Head of School/Executive Principal	Katarine Deeks/Max Haimendorf
Telephone number	020 7641 4122
Website	www.arkpaddingtongreen.org
Email address	info@arkpaddingtongreen.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It opened in September 2016 as part of the Ark Schools Multi Academy Trust. The trust has overall responsibility for governance and delegates some powers to a local governing body.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is more than double the national average.
- Over eight out of 10 pupils speak English as an additional language, nearly four times the national average. A considerable minority of these pupils start school at the very early stages of learning English.
- The school serves a diverse community. The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups being of Kurdish or Arab heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average, although more pupils in this

school have education, health and care plans than is the case nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited every class at least once, apart from Year 5, whose pupils were on a school residential trip during the inspection. These visits covered a range of subjects and most were conducted jointly with school leaders.
- The inspection team met with school leaders, other staff (including those at the early stages of their career), members of the governing body (including the chair of governors), regional directors from the trust and leaders who work across both this school and the all-through school with which Ark Paddington will amalgamate in September 2019.
- Inspectors read with pupils, talked to them about their work, and gathered their views both formally and in informal settings such as the playground and the lunch hall. They also looked at the work pupils have completed in their books since the beginning of the academic year.
- The inspection team took into account the 17 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the comments left on the free-text facility, as well as gathering parents' views at the start and end of the school day and looking at the results of the school's most recent questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, attendance figures, records of monitoring of teaching and learning, curriculum plans and information about pupils' academic performance.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Hall

Ofsted Inspector

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