

Inspection of Stepney Park Primary School

Smithy Street, Stepney, London E1 3BW

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring school where everyone is made to feel welcome. Pupils are welcoming, courteous and accepting of others, too. Pupils work and play alongside one another, regardless of differences or needs. Leaders encourage respect for ambition, and pupils' enthusiasm to learn. Leaders have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils are excited to discover more.

Leaders make their expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes clear. Throughout the school, pupils behave well and classrooms are calm, including in early years. Pupils know what is expected of them in terms of conduct and are proud when they are rewarded for their behaviour.

Pupils are encouraged to build confidence and resilience through residential trips, including camping overnight, talent shows and competitions, performing to audiences and presenting their work. They gain new experiences through visits linked to their learning. Pupils take on leadership roles in the school council or as eco-champions. They raise money, and make decisions about the charities that should receive funding. Leaders organise opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests through music, art and chess clubs.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, including in early years, and in many subjects, this is securely embedded. They have high aspirations, and have clearly mapped out what they want pupils to learn and when, and in what order it should be taught. The knowledge and skills that leaders intend pupils to learn build up systematically. Pupils build on what they know over time. This helps them to remember more. In early years, children practise their skills independently and with others in the well-structured indoor and outside spaces.

Teachers explain new learning clearly and have secure subject expertise in the subjects they teach. In most lessons, pupils revisit and practise what they already know. This means most pupils recall and develop their knowledge effectively over time. Pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn new things.

Leaders are knowledgeable about how children learn to read, and prioritise the teaching of reading. Staff are well trained, and enhance their skills through further training. Books are matched to pupils' reading abilities, and pupils have opportunities across the day to practise reading. This helps pupils to develop their reading fluency and further enhances their enjoyment of reading. There are systems in place to identify any pupils who are falling behind and support to help them to catch up and keep up. Occasionally, pupils make errors which are not checked or corrected by staff.

Leaders and staff, including those in the early years, have the knowledge to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For many pupils

with SEND, leaders make sure that the right support and adaptations to teaching and resources are in place. This means pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum alongside their peers. For some pupils with more complex needs, leaders' curriculum thinking is not as clear in setting out the essential content that pupils need to know.

Learning the curriculum is not disrupted by behaviour in class. Adults support pupils to manage their emotions well. In the early years, working relationships between adults and children are nurturing and positive.

Leaders have thought carefully about pupils' personal development, and encourage pupils to become responsible and respectful citizens. Pupils are taught the importance of following rules, and introduced to the concept of democracy to help prepare them for life in modern Britain. Leaders deliberately choose texts and experiences that encourage respect for others and different cultures. Pupils are taught about faiths, and visit places of worship in their community.

The governing body supports school leaders effectively. It holds leaders to account and assures itself of the school's development through a range of checks. Staff said that leaders are supportive and mindful of workload. They value opportunities for training and work closely with other schools, the local authority and other experts to develop professionally.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and the governing body fulfil their statutory duties. They complete the necessary checks when recruiting new staff and ensure that all staff have the relevant training and knowledge to safeguard children. This means they know their safeguarding responsibilities, and raise concerns when needed.

Pupils are taught about online safety and how to keep themselves safe. Leaders and school staff know their pupils and families well. They understand the wider local, contextual safeguarding needs of the school. Leaders and staff work closely with the school community and deliver important information to parents and carers about keeping themselves and their children safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For some pupils with SEND who have complex needs, the essential knowledge that leaders want pupils to know and remember is not clearly defined or made explicit. This results in some pupils with SEND missing key components of knowledge or skills. Leaders should ensure that the breadth of curriculum thinking specifically sets out what they want all pupils to know and be able to do.

- Occasionally, in phonics, adults do not check accuracy or correct pupils' errors quickly. Leaders should make sure that all adults check routinely and systematically phonics reading accuracy and address any mistakes.

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 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.

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	100917
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10268194
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	810
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Linda Ewers
Headteacher	Edith Philipsen
Website	www.stepneypark.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2020, when Smithy Street Primary School and Redlands Primary School amalgamated and formed Stepney Park Primary School.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative providers.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art. These involved discussions with senior leaders, curriculum leaders and subject teachers. Inspectors also made visits to lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning across a wide range of subjects.

- Inspectors had meetings with the headteacher and other leaders and staff, including curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff. The lead inspector met with a local authority representative and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for reading and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with the school leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and those responsible for the school's record of pre-employment checks. Inspectors reviewed policies and documents. They also looked at the school's website and other documents.
- Inspectors explored and gathered evidence on the school's wider curriculum offer, the impact of pupils' behaviour and attendance on learning and how leaders are driving improvement and supporting staff with their workload.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked to them throughout the inspection. They asked questions to understand their views of the school. Inspectors also spoke to staff individually and in a group.
- Inspectors reviewed and considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys completed by pupils, parents and staff.

Inspection team

Kieran Bird, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Deborah Walters	His Majesty's Inspector
Sue Brooks	Ofsted Inspector
Sukwinder Samra	Ofsted Inspector

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