

Inspection of Charles Dickens Primary School

Toulmin Street, London SE1 1AF

Inspection dates: 24–25 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told us that they are very happy coming to school. They said that their teachers are kind to them. We found that the school has high expectations of what each pupil can achieve, both academically and personally.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They talked to us about different subjects with great enthusiasm and confidence. For example, in music, pupils said that they have the opportunity to see musical performances as well as the chance to perform at school. This motivates them to learn musical instruments, such as the guitar and drums.

Pupils behave very well. They are taught how to behave and regulate their emotions. In lessons, we saw pupils quickly responding to teachers' instructions. They are enthusiastic about their learning.

Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to take on extra responsibilities. These help to develop their social and personal skills. Pupils take on roles such as those of school councillor, eco-warrior and peer mentor.

Pupils told us that bullying does not happen at their school. They said that if someone says they are being bullied, a peer mentor talks through what bullying is. If they are bullied, they talk to their teachers, who deal with it quickly.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should learn in each subject during their time at school. They have sequenced knowledge and skills well so that pupils build on what they already know. This is important because it helps pupils to have a secure understanding of their learning. The school provides an excellent quality of education for its pupils.

Teaching across all subjects is highly effective and strengthened by the use of specialist teachers in art, music and French. We saw how pupils were inspired by teachers in a Year 3 art lesson. Pupils learned about an African artist and used digital art to replicate the artist's patterns. They were astounded by their results!

Pupils rise to the high expectations that the leaders and teachers have set for them. As a result, all pupils achieve very well.

Leaders and teachers are determined that every pupil will learn to read. Younger pupils learn phonics early on and use this knowledge when reading. Teachers give pupils reading books that help them practise the sounds that they have learned.

Leaders check that any pupil who is falling behind gets extra support. This closes the gaps in these pupils' phonics knowledge and helps them with their reading.

Older pupils told us that they enjoy reading. They showed us their reading passports with great pride. Teachers encourage pupils to read a wide range of books and give rewards for doing so.

Governors are very good critical friends to leaders. They are tenacious in their analysis of the school's progress and hold leaders to account.

Teachers told us that they love working at this school. They said that leaders consider their workload.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional. They have a great thirst for learning. We did not see any pupil messing around in lessons. This is because leaders and teachers have carefully planned pupils' learning and deliver it very well.

The curriculum plans are very well adapted for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work with other professionals, such as the educational psychologist, to meet the needs of these pupils. As a result, these pupils achieve highly.

The development of pupils' personal, social and emotional intelligence is a great strength. Pupils have a range of worthwhile, well-taught activities and experiences. These help them to become active citizens. For example, pupils took part in a climate change protest about global warming. Pupils told us that they worried about animals in the sea eating plastic.

Children in early years, including the two-year-olds, are extremely happy and safe. Staff are very well trained to help children develop speaking and listening skills. Children show high levels of concentration and involvement in their chosen activities. For example, we saw children in Nursery enthused in their construction of a train track. Staff encouraged them to use correct language, for example to describe the position of the tracks, and children could already count to eight.

Children get a firm foundation in reading and mathematics. They achieve very well in the different areas of learning. For example, we saw children's artwork in which they explored shapes and patterns created in the style of Matisse.

Parents and carers are kept very well informed about their children's learning and development. Staff do this in a variety of ways, including the use of notice boards and social media.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to spot any changes to pupils' behaviour. They know what to do if they think that a pupil is at risk.

Leaders are very aware of the dangers in the local area. They teach pupils ways of keeping themselves safe. Pupils told us that they feel safe at school. They can talk to adults in the school or post their concerns in a 'worry box'.

Leaders check the internet searches in school to see if any pupils may need help in keeping safe online. Parents are also offered workshops to help them protect their children when using the internet.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	100781
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10110490
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	481
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Claire Maugham Rebecca Kaloo
Headteacher	Cassandra Buchanan
Website	www.charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2008

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in 2013.
- There is provision for two-year-olds. Children attend the provision either on a full-time or part-time basis.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and leaders for inclusion, mathematics, early years foundation stage and curriculum leaders. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Reading, mathematics, science, history, geography, religious education, art and music were subjects that we considered during this inspection. This entailed discussions with curriculum leaders, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils.

- We met with leaders responsible for safeguarding to explore its effectiveness. We also talked to pupils and staff. We scrutinised documents related to safeguarding.
- We met with leaders and staff responsible for behaviour, attendance, personal development and SEND provision.
- We talked to pupils during social times about their behaviour and their school experiences.
- We also talked to staff about their workload and well-being and elicited their views on how well pupils' behaviour is managed.
- We analysed the 135 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the school's own internal parent survey.
- We considered any written communication from parents.

Inspection team

Rajeshree Mehta, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Lloyd	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemarie McCarthy	Ofsted Inspector

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