

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Southwold Primary School

Detmold Road, Clapton, Hackney E5 9NL

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 April 2025

Outcome

Southwold Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this welcoming school. Pupils work hard and take pride in their learning. They attend school regularly because they have kind friends to play with and know that learning is important.

Relationships between staff, pupils and their families are positive and respectful. Pupils are confident that, if they have a worry or a concern teachers will listen and help them. This helps pupils feel valued and happy.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is impeccable. In class, pupils focus extremely well on their learning. Pupils collaborate well with their peers. This starts in the early years, where children are taught to take turns and share.

Pupils play an important role in supporting the school's nurturing environment. Pupil 'peer mediators' look out for those who might need someone to play with. Year 6 lunchtime helpers are proud to support younger pupils in the dining hall.

The school has high academic ambition for all pupils. Pupils are rightly proud to reach the school's high expectations. End-of-year outcomes for Year 6 in the national tests in 2024 in reading, writing and mathematics were phenomenally high. This is with a cohort with well above average levels of disadvantage. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. The knowledge, skills and vocabulary that the school expects pupils to learn year-on-year are clearly identified. Vocabulary development is a priority across the school. For example, in geography pupils learn words such as 'temperate', 'climate' and 'layers', which they use with understanding and confidence when comparing forests in different climates. Across the school, pupils build deep and connected knowledge.

Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. They explain new concepts with precision. Pupils have regular opportunities to link their current learning to their previous learning. This helps them embed learning in their long-term memory. Teachers give pupils ample time to practise what they have learned. For example, in the Reception Year, children practise making ten in different ways. This knowledge prepares children well for mathematical learning that will follow in Year 1.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. For each year group, the school has carefully identified texts that pupils will know 'inside-out'. Pupils speak about their love of reading challenging texts with enthusiasm.

Children learn to recognise initial sounds in the Nursery Year. This supports children for phonics learning in the Reception Year. Children learn phonics as soon as they join the Reception Year. Teachers are experts at teaching phonics. This means that the reading programme is delivered effectively and consistently. If misconceptions arise, teachers address them quickly. Pupils read books that are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. This helps pupils to read with developing fluency and confidence. If pupils fall behind, they quickly get the right support to catch up.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified. The school works alongside external professionals who provide the school with guidance so that these pupils access the curriculum successfully. Teachers are knowledgeable of pupils' needs. Therefore, teaching approaches are appropriate and effective. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve highly.

Pupils are highly motivated to learn. From the early years, children show a focused attitude towards their learning. As a result, classrooms are calm, purposeful places. Teaching is not interrupted. Pupils who need help to manage their behaviour receive appropriate, targeted support.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is exemplary. Carefully planned visits to art galleries, forests and places of worship enhance the curriculum. Residential within the United Kingdom and abroad support pupils to develop resilience and independence.

The school aims for pupils to be proud, confident citizens. Representatives from different industries talk to pupils about careers in law and technology. Pupils visit Cambridge University to learn about the different courses on offer. The school gives pupils the opportunity to become a school leader for a day. For example, pupils can apply to be the

site keeper or the headteacher. Pupils receive feedback on their application and interview. These opportunities raise ambition.

Pupils are taught how to identify risk. They know not to publish personal information online. Pupils learn about consent and healthy and unhealthy relationships in an age-appropriate manner.

Leaders and governors are extremely ambitious for the school. They are rightly proud of all the school has to offer. The governing body has appropriate processes in place to check the effectiveness of the school. Staff are extremely positive about the school. They value the consideration leaders give to manage their workload and support their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in October 2019.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100242
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10345634
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	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Victoria Crawford
Headteacher	Ruth Grover
Website	www.southwold.hackney.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2019

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher of this school is Stephen O'Brien.
- The school is part of The Viridis Federation consisting of three schools.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club daily.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the senior leadership team.

- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, and the school improvement partner.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to some pupils in Years 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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