

# Gayhurst Community School

Gayhurst Road, Hackney E8 3EN

**Inspection dates** 2–3 February 2016

**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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher's exemplary leadership and high expectations have empowered the school to improve outcomes since the last inspection.
- Since the previous inspection, strong teamwork among senior leaders, including members of the governing body, has contributed very well to bringing about improvement. This is the result of a clear vision, and the ability to inspire staff at all levels.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Pupils feel safe, show pride in their school and are extremely happy there.
- Pupils become deeply involved in their learning and show stamina for long periods of time.
- The quality of teaching and assessment is good and improving strongly. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully and use the information well to plan well-thought-out sequential activities.
- Outcomes are good overall. Standards achieved in the 2015 national tests were significantly above average.
- Most pupils make the expected progress with a minority exceeding the rates of progress expected in English and mathematics. This is particularly so for the most-able pupils.
- Provision in the early years is good and improving strongly. The good practice found at the last inspection has been sustained.
- The curriculum provides challenge and opportunities for pupils to take part in wide-ranging enrichment activities. This provision is a strength of the school; it promotes very well pupils' learning, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding of British values.
- Partnership work with parents, the federation and the Hackney Teaching School Alliance is highly effective. Collaborative work is used very well to enhance and develop good practice.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The rates of progress for most disadvantaged pupils is not rapid enough to ensure that a higher proportion can exceed the expected rates of progress in English and mathematics.
- Aspects of teaching require a sharper focus to enable all groups of pupils to achieve consistently above average progress.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability and all pupils nationally is closed at a quicker pace by focusing on:
  - critically analysing assessment information to identify the in-school gap, particularly at the higher level, and take appropriate actions to address the known weaknesses
  - evaluating the actions taken and identify their impact and next steps
  - support staff being more proactive, particularly during whole-class teaching, by showing pupils how to acquire and develop the taught skills at a high level, for example through demonstrating and questioning
  - increasing further the proportion of outstanding teaching so that more disadvantaged pupils can exceed expected progress rates.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Senior leaders and managers, including the governors, at all levels are driven by the school's vision of high expectations for all pupils to be 'valued, inspired and nurtured to achieve success'.
- Together, the executive headteacher and other senior leaders maintain a continuous focus on improving outcomes and the quality of teaching for pupils. Since 2012, they have transformed the culture of the school so that expectations are equally high for all pupils irrespective of their starting points. Consequently, mediocrity has been dismissed and replaced with a culture of high expectations of work and behaviour.
- Transformation of the school's work included developing new and accurate systems for assessing pupils' progress, improving the quality of teaching and learning, putting in place strong systems to hold staff to account for pupils' progress and using the partnership work with parents and other schools to raise standards further.
- The vast majority of parents very much appreciate the changes made over the last three years, and say that the school is well established and valued in the community. A parent summed up the school's work by writing that, 'Gayhurst is a creative and caring school which gives all its pupils, irrespective of background or ability, a love of learning, fair play and fellowship.'
- Leaders have developed some extremely good systems for sustaining the school's capacity to improve. Performance management, succession planning, training and development across the federation with Kingsmead Primary School are very well planned. All staff have equal opportunities to progress, select a career pathway and to either enhance their leadership or their teaching skills. Professional development and training enable all staff to make a substantial contribution to the school's development. The development of writing exemplifies the use of action research to develop pupils' writing skills. Pupils are making outstanding progress in this element of English.
- Systems for checking the quality of teaching are continuous and robust. Regular and focused short visits to lessons provide senior leaders with evaluative information that enables them to refine the quality of teaching.
- Effective systems are used to track pupils' progress and attainment. Senior leaders at all levels analyse assessment information to ensure that all pupils have equal access to achieve well. They assess the school's effectiveness and use the information to develop transition across year groups and key stages. Findings have led to improving the targeted support for disadvantaged pupils since September, with the aim of closing the in-school attainment gap further and accelerating progress to help more exceed expected progress.
- Partnership work within the federation, with a national teaching school and with other schools in the Hackney Teaching School Alliance, is used very well to develop moderation skills, teaching and learning, trainee teachers and to extend learning opportunities.
- The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to explore and deepen their understanding of subjects taught within the National Curriculum. Extended project work begins from the early years through to Year 6 and enables pupils to begin developing research skills. Workshops and newsletters are used to provide parents with information on supporting their child's learning.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, special and cultural development is outstanding. The school's ethos enables pupils to quickly increase in self-confidence, knowing that they belong to and have a part to play in their school and wider community. The school promotes British values very well. Pupils understand what it means to belong to a community. They apply the concept of tolerance and respect for others as they interact with each other. All this enables them to move within cultures without losing their personal identity. Curriculum planning prepares pupils very well for life in Britain as a diverse country.
- The school uses the pupil premium well to provide extra support to boost disadvantaged pupils' progress. This was evident in the school's best results achieved in 2015; most pupils made expected progress in English and mathematics. However, senior leaders recognise that a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils could make more than expected progress and have already implemented successful actions to bring this about.

- The school's careful planning and use of sports premium funding enables pupils to demonstrate their sporting prowess. For example, the school won Transport for London's award for excellence in cycling and received gold level stars for accreditation for sustainable travel. Pupils also receive specialist gymnastics teaching, ballroom dancing, cycling, fencing and archery, and the opportunity to take part in the Hackney marathon. The school is in the process of evaluating the impact of the funding.
- Provision for pupils on the special educational needs register and for those with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well led. Targeted planning to meet the needs of each pupil is linked to careful, continuous assessment and a range of specialist support. Assessments of pupils' needs are robust, but evaluations of the effectiveness of strategies are not as rigorous. Regular training and work with external partners ensure that staff know how to keep pupils safe.
- The school has extremely good systems for safeguarding and protecting pupils. Statutory checks and up-to-date reading of national priorities are carried out routinely. The administration of this work is secure, as is the partnership work with external agencies to provide help and support for pupils when necessary.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Members of the governing body work as a cohesive group within the federation. This ensures that the strategic priorities are tailored to the needs of the school and the broader priorities across the federation.
  - Governors are knowledgeable about the school and have a very good understanding of the quality and impact of teaching, and in particular the changing local demography and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. They check assessment information, as well as that provided by the Department for Education, to gain a detailed understanding of how well different groups are performing. Records indicate that they hold staff to account for pupils' achievement, and work with senior leaders to ensure that all additional funding is spent appropriately and there is direct impact on pupils.
  - They have a good understanding of performance management and of the quality of teaching and moderation through direct visits and external and internal reviews. Governors keep up to date with trends in education as well as in all areas of requirement. As a result, they have ensured that staff and pupils know about the 'Prevent' duty and all child protection and safeguarding matters.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The school has built on the good quality of teaching found at the previous inspection. Regular whole-staff training on the corporate needs of the school, and training focused on phases or groups, ensure that staff are continually provided with opportunities to refine their skills.
- Good subject expertise and high-quality professional training mean that teaching is typically good and improving strongly. This is enabling the vast majority of pupils to make expected progress in English and mathematics and other subjects taught. Nevertheless, there is more to do to ensure that more disadvantaged pupils can exceed expected progress similar to their peers in the school.
- Classrooms are very well managed and expectations of work and behaviour are high. Relationships are extremely good. Pupils' use of teachers' first names is never exploited and teachers and pupils are very much at ease with each other. Lessons, therefore, progress in a purposeful environment which helps pupils to learn well.
- Teachers provide a wide range of resources that help to motivate pupils and involve them in their learning. They question pupils closely and use a range of groupings to facilitate learning. However, opportunities to deepen thinking and develop pupils' ideas, so that all pupils have a secure understanding of their learning, are not always used. Evidence indicates that this at times prevents disadvantaged pupils making even better progress.
- Teaching assistants provide good support but not all are actively providing support for pupils during carpet-time activities in order to maximise and improve on learning. This is particularly so for pupils who have special educational needs or disability and those receiving additional funding.
- Teachers make very good use of paired and group work, particularly 'talk partners', for pupils to develop their ideas, support each other and assess each other's work. While this is a particular strength of pupils' learning, their eagerness to talk sometimes prevents them from listening very well to each other.

- Teachers take account of pupils' starting points when planning and selecting resources. This provides a clear sequence of skill development, particularly evident in English and mathematics. For example, in literacy lessons, there is strong evidence that from the early years pupils have a strong stamina for writing.
- The development of writing is a key strength of the school's work; it is very well taught through the use of demonstrations and talk to explore ideas. From Year 1, pupils begin to use the writing process well to plan, draft and edit their work.
- The majority of pupils make outstanding progress in writing and currently good progress in reading and mathematics overall. Teachers increase pupils' vocabulary and reading skills through using a wide range of genres, comprehension and research work.
- Discussions with pupils indicated that mathematics and art are their favourite subjects. The teaching of mathematics meets the needs of most pupils. Whereas the most able say they are suitably challenged to think and articulate their answers, some pupils who receive additional support indicate that they could be challenged even more. The teaching of art and creative subjects, such as drumming and dance, are routinely taught, but pupils are keen to have even more time in these subjects to express their ideas.
- Thorough assessment procedures give teachers a clear grasp of pupils' understanding and misconceptions and contribute to their recapping and reinforcing skills. Occasionally, teachers do not all ensure that new and unknown vocabulary or ideas are reinforced thoroughly, for example in mathematics. This is particularly so for pupils who do not command a wide vocabulary or understand a process. On these occasions, a brief explanation is not sufficient and can lead to confusion among pupils.
- Marking of books, especially in literacy, is thorough. Teachers give clear next steps guidance so that pupils know how to improve their work. This practice is well embedded from Year 1 onwards with pupils reading through the comments and responding to the marking. Over time, improvement is evident. However, the depth and quality of marking is less strong in mathematics and other subjects than in English.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident and exude a strong work ethic and discipline in lessons. They move sensibly around the school and in social spaces, such as the playground and dining hall, and they keep to the school rules. This high level of discipline translates to their work; they settle down quickly to work and do not waste time.
- Pupils attribute their positive disposition towards learning to their teachers who they say 'encourage them to make them see that they can be anything they want to be'. This has led to their rising to challenges in lessons and reflecting their teachers' enthusiasm. They respect and value teachers as role models.
- Pupils support one another and see their school as a community where pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds are all happy friends who treat each other with respect. They demonstrate a mature understanding of tolerance, as well as social and moral values, summed up by a Year 3 pupil who said, 'We treat each other as we would wish to be treated.'
- Pupils are involved in a wide range of activities both in school and in the community. Their involvement in the school community includes the school council members speaking out for others; performing duties as school buddies; working as librarians; carrying out general duties and using their position on the learning council to observe and critique teaching. Pupils are clear that they have helped to 'make their teachers better teachers'. Evidence to support this claim includes pupils' views that lessons are now more 'fun, engaging and creative'.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They are assured that their safety is given a high priority because of the numerous fire practice drills, high visibility of staff and other procedures to safeguard their well-being.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Excellent behaviour around the school contributes to pupils demonstrating a strong sense of right and wrong, and reinforces the outstanding provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The vast majority of parents who took part in Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that behaviour is a strength of the school's work, and one that pupils take back into the home environment.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of e-safety, different forms of bullying and how to keep safe and avoid risks. They are clear about how to report incidents should they occur. Pupils are confident that any bullying is dealt with promptly and say that there are few such incidents. This is because the topic is raised often in assemblies and there are 'very few targets' because everyone in the school gets on very well together.
- Attendance is above the national average for primary schools. A small number of pupils have lower rates of attendance and these are due to their personal or medical needs. The breakfast club contributes very well to pupils attending early as well as to their health and well-being.
- Fixed-term exclusions are rare. The school has not had any permanent exclusions over the last three years.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Evidence from pupils' work shows that, currently, pupils' academic progress is good and standards are above average.
- Since the previous inspection, standards have varied from average to above average in all subjects. In 2015, pupils' standards were above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and progress was average for all pupils. However, while the most-able pupils made significantly above average progress, disadvantaged pupils, those from some minority ethnic groups and pupils who have special educational needs or disability made slower progress. Leaders are alert to this and have already implemented successful action to close any gaps between the achievement of these pupils and all others.
- Over the last three years, the improving trend in pupils' performance, particularly in writing, has led to outcomes in 2015 being significantly above average in both Key Stages 1 and 2. These were the best results achieved in writing over the last five years and reflect the extremely effective leadership of both senior and middle managers. This was possible because of the sharp focus on developing writing in 2014/15. The rapid progress made has been sustained and the school is now focusing on ensuring that pupils can make similarly rapid progress in mathematics and reading.
- Over the last two academic years, progress in reading from the early years to Year 1 has been well above average in the phonics (the sounds letters make) screening checks. However, this strong performance masks the below national average outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and well below average standards for those with special educational needs support. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan exceeded the standard expected nationally. Inspection evidence confirms that the new reading project introduced at the start of the current school year is promoting pupils' reading skills well, in particular their ability to analyse different texts and comment on the writer's use of language.
- The teaching of phonics is very well planned and motivates pupils who come to love reading. Across the school, strategies to develop reading skills lead to pupils being very well supported in small groups. Pupils use good phonics skills to pronounce unknown words. As a result, by the end of Year 2, the results of those retaking the phonics screening is well above average.
- Across the school, the most-able pupils make expected progress, with an above-average proportion making exceptionally good progress in both Key Stages 1 and 2, in all subjects.
- While pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium achieved well in Key Stage 1, very few achieved a higher level in the national tests. This was also reflected in the 2015 Key Stage 2 national tests. For the first time in three years, the attainment gap widened. However, evidence from the school's current assessment information shows that the gap is narrowing. The school has acted swiftly to provide support earlier, from the point of entry into the early years.
- Assessment information shows that pupils on the special educational needs register and those with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan are making expected progress. This is as a result of precise planning. Moderation of pupils' work within the federation and Hackney Teaching School Alliance provides rigour and accuracy in relation to assessing pupils' needs.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups made expected progress overall but the few pupils from Caribbean heritage, those speaking English as an additional language and pupils from other mixed background groups made slower progress than their respective groups nationally and all pupils nationally in both the 2015 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 national tests. Progress currently is similar to their peers in the school.

## Early years provision

is good

- Children are very well prepared to make the transition to Year 1 when they leave the early years. This is because, typically, good-quality teaching has resulted in an above-average proportion of children exceeding the attainment expected for their age in all areas of learning. Outcomes over time, however, showed that disadvantaged children were not all reaching a similarly good level of development for children their age in the school and others nationally. Adjustments have been made to provision in the early years, where pupil premium funding has enabled early interventions in order to close the attainment gap between this group and their peers in the school. Inspection evidence indicates good progress in using the strategies to accelerate children's progress.
- Very good opportunities are provided for children to become confident and self-assured, with excellent attitudes to learning, particularly in developing their communication, number skills and in their personal development. Children work hard under the guidance of their teachers and support staff. However, staff recognise that the provision could provide a sharper focus on independent activities to enable children to access wider curriculum opportunities. This would enable staff to assess how well the children are demonstrating their learning without evident adult support and direction.
- Attainment on entry, previously below average in recent years, is now broadly average. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children enter with confidence and a sense of enjoyment and anticipation, and without hesitation when leaving their parents. This is because they are entering a calm environment where relationships with staff are very well established and with routines that they know and understand.
- Established routines mean that children learn in a highly structured environment that is largely adult led. This contributes very well to developing children's progress in all areas of literacy and communication and numeracy. However, wider aspects of the early years curriculum are not given a similarly high level of attention and neither is there an opportunity for children to make good use of the outdoor facilities during these structured sessions.
- Staff track and accurately assess children's achievement and record this in their individual profiles. Evidence of children's learning and records of their personal development include photographs and samples of their work which are well annotated.
- Parents are very appreciative of the care and support provided for the children in the early years provision. Staff are well trained to secure their well-being and the children are very safe and happy. They behave very well and relationships between groups are very good.
- The early years provision is extremely well resourced, with all areas utilised in the nursery to maximise learning. The early years is well regarded for its inclusivity and giving the children a good start for Year 1. As a result of the strong leadership of the early years leader, the diverse needs of children are met and they are provided with opportunities to make good progress.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130301
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001470

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	586
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joanne Revett
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Louise Nichols
<b>Associate headteacher</b>	Liza Hooper
<b>Interim associate headteacher</b>	Karen Stevenson
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7254 6138
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk">http://www.gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk">admin@gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2–3 February 2016

## Information about this school

- Gayhurst is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The school provides full-time nursery provision for 30 children and 36 children currently attend part time.
- The school serves an ethnically diverse community, with an above-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The main groups are White British, with pupils from any other background?? and pupils from African backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high.
- The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is above average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, additional government funding, is above average. This is the funding provided to support pupils eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The executive headteacher leads Kingsmead Primary School, an outstanding school and a teaching school in the London Borough of Hackney. Prior to the previous inspection, the permanent headteacher retired and an interim headteacher was appointed. During 2012, there were difficulties recruiting a permanent headteacher to the substantive post. The governing body, therefore, appointed the executive headteacher to lead the school and form a loose federation with Kingsmead Primary School. The executive headteacher restructured the senior leadership team. The school is led by an associate headteacher who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, while the executive headteacher is responsible for the strategic leadership and management. In June 2015, the school formally federated with Kingsmead Primary School.



- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was converted from a section 8 short inspection to a full section 5 inspection over two days.
- Inspectors observed a range of learning activities, including 21 lesson observations. Of these, 15 were made jointly with senior leaders. Short visits were also made to a range of lessons.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, other senior and phase leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and with two other governors. Four groups of pupils were interviewed, including the learning council and school council. A meeting was also held with the school improvement partner from Hackney Learning Trust.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation. This included the school's evaluation and development plan; its checks and evaluation of teaching and performance management; assessment records of pupils' attainment, progress and behaviour; evidence of systems for protecting and safeguarding pupils; and minutes of the governing body meetings. Inspectors also scrutinised newsletters and displays around the school.
- The inspectors took into consideration 66 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including 57 free text written responses. An inspector spoke to a few parents on the first day of the inspection. They also took into account 26 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Carmen Rodney, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Beale	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Phillips	Ofsted Inspector
James Robinson	Ofsted Inspector

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