

Sybourn Primary School

Sybourn Street, London, E17 8HA

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Outstanding leadership from leaders and governors has brought about rapid improvement since the school became an academy.
- Teaching and achievement have improved considerably and are now good.
- Children make a good start in the well-resourced and stimulating early years provision.
- Teachers give pupils clear guidance about what they are learning and have high expectations of their work.
- The school promotes pupils' safety extremely well and makes a great difference to vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Pupils take on many roles of responsibility across the academy, which they carry out with dedication.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of subjects, enhanced by visits and visitors.
- Governors use their expertise to support and challenge the academy's leaders very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not all teachers apply the marking policy consistently, especially checking how pupils have acted upon their guidance.
- While behaviour is good overall, pupils sometimes become distracted when teachers focus too much on minor misdemeanours; there is no common approach to praise and rewards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 55 lessons, or parts of lessons, most of which were observed jointly with the senior leaders. Inspectors also attended two assemblies.
- Members of the inspection team listened to pupils read and, with senior leaders, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of academy documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports and safeguarding records. They considered evidence of the academy's partnership work and the information provided for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff. Inspectors talked to the Chair of the Governing Body, the chief executive of the Lion Academy Trust and an external consultant who has been supporting the academy.
- The inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke informally to parents and carers in the playground and had a telephone conversation with one parent.
- The inspectors considered the 47 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janice Thomas	Additional Inspector
Martine Clark	Additional Inspector
Andrew Turnock	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sybourn Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school. There are three classes in each year group.
- The school became a sponsored academy with the Lion Academy Trust in September 2013.
- The early years consists of a Nursery and three Reception classes on a separate site about half a mile away. Children attend the Nursery part time and the Reception classes full time.
- Almost all pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high, including many at the early stages of speaking English.
- The number of pupils who join or leave the academy during the year is high.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school shares its early years site with a day nursery, which did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by applying the marking policy consistently and ensuring that teachers check how pupils have acted upon their guidance.
- Make sure that all pupils are fully engaged in learning by adopting a common approach to praise and rewards.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Since the school was sponsored as an academy, leaders, managers and governors have been highly successful in driving improvement. Their relentless focus on improving teaching has transformed pupils' experiences, so that they now receive a rich diet of exciting and purposeful learning.
- The senior leadership team, in close collaboration with the Lion Academy Trust, has established a culture of high expectations which all those involved with the academy embrace. As a result, teaching and behaviour are consistently good.
- Outstanding leadership of teaching holds all staff fully accountable for their work and provides high-quality coaching and training. This has helped teachers to improve their practice. Teachers receive very comprehensive feedback about all aspects of their work and are active in assessing their own strengths and areas to improve.
- The assistant headteachers have the time to work closely with teaching staff from specific year groups to support their planning and share outstanding practice. Subject leaders and other leaders have a full command of their areas. They join senior leaders in making rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and give clear feedback to staff. They make an important contribution to the academy's success.
- Leaders have a very good understanding of the academy's strengths and areas to improve and devise precise plans for further development. They use these to measure the rate of improvement.
- The academy uses the pupil premium effectively to support disadvantaged pupils, both personally and academically. Leaders target programmes to meet their specific needs. Pupils also benefit from help with the cost of trips and clubs. The academy ensures that all pupils are treated equally and have every opportunity to succeed. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils find the range of subjects engaging. It responds to their needs well. For example, the academy has looked at ways of helping boys to improve their writing, such as through the stimulus of an 'alien invasion day' when several 'aliens' invaded.
- The academy celebrates the many cultures of its pupils through, for example, 'diversity month', when parents are invited to join them in sharing their experiences. The academy promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. Attractive displays of artwork highlight different cultures. Pupils have good social skills; they discuss ideas freely.
- The academy's values align closely with British values and prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. They create a cohesive and tolerant community. Pupils used the general election to hold mock elections and to find out more about democracy and the rule of law. Their experiences are enhanced by many different visits, visitors and clubs. Pupils have been very successful in regional and national chess tournaments.
- Most parents are positive about the academy and comment on how much it has improved in the 18 months since it was formed. They value workshops such as those explaining how the academy teaches phonics (the sounds that letters represent) and homework.
- The Lion Academy Trust provides very effective support for the academy and enables Sybourn to share its best practice, for example in safeguarding and pastoral well-being, with the other academies.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent on a specialist physical education teacher and training for staff. Additional coaches also teach a wide range of sports to pupils, including trampolining. These activities have increased teachers' confidence and led to greater participation by pupils. Pupils also take part in tournaments across the Trust and local authority.
- The academy's safeguarding arrangements are outstanding and very thorough. All staff are fully trained and careful checks are made before anybody starts work. There is excellent cooperation with other agencies. Staff have a wealth of experience in safeguarding matters which they use extremely well to support vulnerable pupils and their families.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is highly effective. Governors have a very clear understanding of pupils' achievement and data, and the quality of teaching. They bring a wide range of expertise to support and challenge the academy's leaders. They are involved in rewarding good teaching and ensuring that underperformance is challenged. They set ambitious targets for senior leaders and keep a close eye on how the performance of staff is managed. The academy benefits from the support of the Trust in managing finances and other central services.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show respect and care for one another. They are polite to adults and to visitors. They respond well to instructions. They move sensibly and safely around the school. They line up well in the playground. Their attitudes to learning are generally very positive.
- Occasionally there are minor disagreements between pupils in lessons that slow progress. They become less engaged if teachers focus on these rather than praising the pupils who are behaving well.
- Pupils make good use of the aids to learning in and around their classrooms. Displays for particular subjects offer prompts that are relevant to what they are studying.
- Pupils respect the academy and take pride in their work. Pupils and parents comment on how behaviour has improved since the school became an academy as a result of its very strong leadership.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility as members of the school council and as 'Sybourn Champions', who support pupils in improving the school. Pupils also act as peer mediators to resolve minor conflicts on the playground. Pupils are librarians, 'digi-leaders' (supporting pupils with technology) and sports ambassadors, promoting healthy lifestyles.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- There are excellent systems and procedures to keep pupils safe. Highly experienced staff manage any concerns extremely well and keep meticulous records. Pupils say they feel completely safe, a view supported by most parents.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue and they have every confidence in staff to sort out any worries they may have. They know about different types of bullying, such as racist bullying and social media threats. Pupils have designed posters to discourage bullying.
- Members of the eco-committee conduct safety reviews of the site with staff, checking for any hazards.
- All staff are fully aware of current social risks facing local communities and how to be alert for them.
- There is outstanding support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The learning mentors provide a wide range of services to help these pupils make the most of their education and overcome any difficulties they may be facing.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. The academy is working hard to support the very few families whose children miss a large amount of school and whose absence brings down the overall figures to below average.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved greatly since the school became an academy. Teachers have received all necessary support to ensure teaching is consistently good. They have high expectations of pupils and make clear to them exactly what they are learning. They use questioning well to probe pupils' thinking and to deepen their understanding. For example, Year 6 pupils were learning about 'The Good Samaritan' in religious education. Effective questioning helped them to understand what it is like to be a good Samaritan, or to receive help from one.
- Mathematics is taught well. A new approach this year focuses on real-life problems and using mathematics in context. For example, pupils were using a commercial railways website to find the actual times of trains to solve time problems. Pupils said they found this helpful. Year 5 pupils were given a recipe and had to work out the amounts of ingredients they would need to cater for 30 people. Pupils were systematic and methodical in their approach to solving the problem.
- Pupils enjoy learning. For example, Year 1 pupils were excited about describing pirates and one child wrote of a 'super, silver sword'. The impact of teaching on learning and achievement in literacy is good because pupils receive all the support they need to write well. For example, at the start of a unit of work they write a 'cold' piece to show their current level of understanding. Teachers use these initial attempts to plan appropriate learning that will enable pupils to produce good quality work by the end of the unit. Their final 'hot' piece shows the progress they have made.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils read daily and carry out interesting exercises that develop their reading skills well. For example, in Year 5, each pupil in a group had a specific role as they considered the text together: one asked questions; one summarised the meaning; and one predicted what might happen next. This gave them a depth of understanding and they learnt from one another's ideas.
- Attractive reading corners across the academy raise the profile of reading. Pupils know that if they 'get caught reading' they will be rewarded. The academy has kindled a love of reading successfully in pupils. Pupils also have opportunities to read at home through an online reading programme.

- Mostly, marking is effective in helping pupils to improve their work. However, there is some inconsistency in how regularly teachers mark books, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils routinely act upon teachers' helpful comments, but sometimes teachers do not check what difference this has made to their learning.
- Learning support assistants work closely with teachers. They receive high-quality training and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- On the rare occasions when pupils are not fully engaged in learning, this is because teaching staff focus too much on drawing attention to minor misdemeanours rather than building positive relationships through a common approach to praise and rewards.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills at levels well below those typical for their age, especially in language and communication. They make good progress across the early years because staff know the children very well as individuals and tailor work to meet their needs.
- When the school became an academy, a very low proportion of pupils were reaching the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check. A clear approach to teaching phonics and expert training for staff have led to rapid improvement this year. An average proportion of pupils are on course to reach the required standard.
- On becoming an academy, standards were low by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This was because of a legacy of underachievement. As teaching has improved, so attainment has risen. A focus on writing in 2014 produced a considerable improvement by the end of Year 6 and standards were in line with the national average. Standards remained below average in reading and mathematics.
- This year, new approaches to reading and mathematics mean that Year 6 pupils are on course to reach expected attainment in all three subjects. This represents good progress from their different starting points. Similarly, in Year 2, standards are rising, especially at the higher levels. This is because the teaching is challenging pupils to make accelerated progress. Year 2 pupils are on track to reach expected levels of attainment in writing by the end of the year and to be close to these levels in reading and mathematics.
- Taking into account the high numbers of pupils who join and leave the academy outside normal times, pupils achieve well. When pupils leave the academy early, the good work staff have accomplished is not translated into end of key stage test results. When pupils join the academy later in their school careers from elsewhere, or particularly when they have had no previous schooling, the academy has less time to bring them up to the required standards. Many of these pupils join the academy speaking little or no English.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because staff identify their needs promptly. They arrange effective programmes of support that are tailored well to meet their needs. Leaders keep the impact of the support under constant review and provide high-quality training for learning support assistants to ensure that they are fully equipped to provide all the assistance pupils need.
- A six-week 'language lab' caters well for the needs of pupils who join the school speaking little or no English. After an intensive introduction to the language, pupils are well equipped to access the learning in class.
- The most able pupils are challenged well to make good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. Teachers ensure that they set work at the right level for pupils and check their progress to make sure they are always doing as well as they can. This has resulted in more pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment this year.
- At the time the school became an academy, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was very low. In 2014, their attainment was behind that of other pupils nationally by just over three terms in reading, one term in writing and three-and-a-half terms in mathematics. Compared with other pupils in the school, disadvantaged pupils in 2014 were around half a term ahead in reading and mathematics and at similar levels in writing. This was because other pupils had not performed well.
- This year, because funding has been well targeted to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils, attainment has risen. They have kept pace with their classmates and are on course to reach average standards.

The early years provision

is good

- All groups of children make good progress from their starting points. This is because teaching is good. Children benefit from a wide range of well-planned, stimulating activities that feed their natural curiosity.
- The outdoor areas for Nursery and Reception have been recently upgraded and contribute significantly to children's positive experiences of school. They access all areas of learning in well-resourced and imaginative spaces.
- The early years is led and managed extremely well. Staff use a highly effective online system to track children's progress, which is shared with parents. They provide workshops for parents so they can support their children's learning at home.
- Staff work together very well. Excellent procedures ensure that children stay safe, while having the freedom to take appropriate risks for their development. They behave well, take turns and play together sensibly. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The teaching of phonics is well organised and meets all children's needs. This enables them to acquire early learning skills quickly. A focus on language development supports those children at the early stages of learning English. Occasionally, staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning further through careful questioning.

What inspection judgements mean

School

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139724
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	450291

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	690
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tina Weiss
Headteacher	Hayden Tyers (executive headteacher) Andy Bocchi (head of school)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8539 4110
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