

Inspection of an outstanding school: Ark Brunel Primary Academy

Middle Row, London W10 5AT

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 June 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like their school. They are happy and safe. This is because adults in school make sure they are well looked after. Staff and pupils form positive relationships, rooted in mutual respect. Pupils like learning with their teachers. They particularly enjoy learning beyond the classroom through visits and performances. Recently, pupils in Year 5 performed alongside a professional choir having rehearsed for several months.

Leaders expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well. They work alongside teachers to make sure learning is adapted where necessary. Pupils enjoy a 'soft start' to school. During this time, staff are on hand to prepare pupils for the day's learning ahead.

Pupils behave well. They respond well to the new lining-up routines and expectations. Pupils learn about friendships through the personal, social and health education curriculum. They know what bullying is and say it does not happen very often. When it does happen, staff deal with it appropriately.

Leaders provide a wide range of curriculum enrichment to support learning. For example, Year 3 pupils visited Little Venice to learn about the history of Regent's Canal.

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

Leaders have put in place a well-sequenced and planned curriculum. It covers the breadth of the national curriculum subjects which leaders continue to evolve. In art, for example, leaders have recently changed units of learning to include a diverse range of artists. They have also considered the best order to teach units to allow pupils to build on earlier learning. However, every year group missed one newly planned unit at the beginning of the year due to these changes. This meant pupils missed some key knowledge needed for

what was taught subsequently. For example, Year 6 missed learning about the dimensions of facial features. This knowledge would have supported their learning about Hannah Hoch's work when adjusting proportions.

Most teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. For instance, mathematics activities in the Reception Year are expertly chosen to consolidate pupils' number knowledge. This allows teachers to check pupils' understanding and address any gaps in learning. Some staff are less secure and would benefit from training in using, for example, concrete, pictorial and abstract mathematical concepts.

Pupils learn to read from the start of the Reception Year. They learn phonics from staff who have had appropriate training. Leaders make sure pupils who have fallen behind with their reading are supported to catch up quickly.

Leaders have introduced new systems and strategies this year to help teachers support pupils with SEND. They work collaboratively with class teachers and suggest resources to ensure learning is adapted effectively. Pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) integrate seamlessly with their mainstream classes. This is because of effective communication between staff in the provision and mainstream teachers.

Pupils know what good behaviour looks like. Staff recognise pupils when they demonstrate the school values of honesty, enthusiasm, ambition, resilience and thoughtfulness. In lessons, most pupils are engaged and meet their teacher's expectations consistently. This means the curriculum is taught without disruption.

Leaders provide pupils with helpful information to aid transition to secondary school. Pupils spoke about practical tips they had learned. For example, pupils explained how they would sit on the top deck with parents on the bottom for their first secondary school bus commute. Staff help pupils take responsibility for fundraising. For example, Year 6 pupils are holding a bake sale to raise money for their own upcoming production. Leaders arrange specialist curriculum days each term. Pupils took part in a morning learning about artists linked to ethnic minority groups and cultures. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to stay safe. They know what to do if something happens online that is inappropriate. Leaders actively encourage pupils to have a positive image of themselves and not bend to peer pressure.

New leaders are passionate about getting the best for pupils and have recently changed some policies and procedures. A significant minority of staff feel their workload has been impacted negatively as a result. However, staff who have experienced personal difficulties said leaders were very supportive of their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure staff fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including what to do if they are worried about a pupil. They make sure pupils get appropriate help.

Staff know what signs may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders engage effectively with the local authority. They make referrals to external agencies as appropriate.

Pupils understand the risks they face. They know how to stay safe on the internet and said they wouldn't share personal information online.

Governors check safer recruitment practices. This means only adults deemed safe to work with pupils are employed by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are inconsistencies in teachers' subject knowledge across the curriculum. This means that sometimes teachers miss opportunities to correct learning. Leaders should make sure all teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This will help pupils know and remember more of the curriculum.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring pupils receive a good quality of education. However, recent initiatives have impacted some staff's workload. Leaders need to engage with all staff effectively to manage the work pressures change presents.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are 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	139645
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10211944
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Marshall
Headteacher	Sean Scott
Website	www.arkbrunelprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2016

Information about this school

- Ark Brunel is part of the ARK Schools network.
- The current headteacher took up the post in March 2022.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 15 pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive principal, the headteacher, other senior leaders and subject leaders.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day and spoke to staff about pupils' personal development. She also held discussions with several groups of pupils about their views of their school.
- The inspector considered the views of parents and staff through Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Alison Colenso, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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