

Inspection of a good school: The Clara Grant Primary School

Knapp Road, Bow, London E3 4BU

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 March 2022

Outcome

The Clara Grant Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They say it is 'like a second home'. Newer pupils say that they were 'welcomed with open arms' when they arrived. They enjoy lessons and work hard. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour. Pupils think staff make these expectations very clear to them.

Pupils remember what they have been taught about how to recognise and respond to different kinds of bullying. They do not think it is a problem at the school. However, when bullying does occur, pupils are confident that staff will sort it out. Pupils say that they appreciate how closely staff listen to their views and concerns.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum is designed so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve well. They have recently developed different types of support for pupils with SEND because their numbers and the range of their needs have increased.

Pupils feel that they have a genuine role to play in further improving the school. For example, they are proud of their work to encourage everyone to recycle more waste materials. Leaders make sure that pupils have lots of opportunities to learn about and celebrate their own culture and those of others in assemblies and at special events.

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

The school has recently joined a different academy trust. Trust leaders have worked effectively with school leaders in a short time to make an immediate and important positive impact on the way the curriculum is designed, organised and put to use.

Children in early years learn to read right from the start and enjoy doing so. There are also opportunities for children to learn to write letters, numbers and words, but this remains less well organised and planned than the reading programme.

Teachers use the curriculum for early reading skilfully and accurately. Pupils who have fallen behind in reading as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are catching up because leaders have put effective support in place. The books that pupils read match their current ability accurately. There is flexibility in the way the teaching of reading is organised, and good communication between leaders and staff about how well pupils are doing. This means that pupils are able to move on to more challenging content as soon as they are ready. More fluent readers are expected to dig deep into the content of books and to work hard to expand their vocabulary.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned and organised. It is taught with confidence because staff receive effective and regular training. Teachers know how well pupils have learned and remembered content without needing to resort to cumbersome methods of checking on pupils' progress. Teachers also know how to adapt lessons for pupils with SEND, so that these pupils enjoy mathematics and achieve as well as others.

Leaders have made it a recent priority to make sure that the curriculum for some other subjects, such as history and geography, identifies more clearly what pupils need to learn. As a result, pupils are remembering and using skills and knowledge they are taught, such as understanding what sustainable resources are. However, teaching in these subjects still sometimes strays away from focusing on exactly what pupils need to learn. Subject leaders are continuing to build a complete picture of what support is needed to further improve teachers' subject knowledge.

Pupils concentrate on their work in lessons because they find it interesting. Children in early years are not easily distracted from activities. Staff use encouraging language to persuade pupils to keep trying even if they are finding a task difficult.

Leaders make sure that there are plenty of opportunities for pupils' wider development. Pupils remember learning how to better manage their money after lessons provided by a bank. School councillors understand their role and are proud of their influence on school life.

Governors and leaders consider the workload and well-being of staff carefully. Staff say that leaders treat them as 'humans first and employees second'. Staff feel involved in, and energised by, leaders' current plans for school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand how to report a concern about pupils' welfare and think the move to recording this electronically has been a welcome improvement. This means that leaders can pick up patterns in concerns more effectively and make sure that pupils get the help they need quickly.

Staff put a great deal of time and effort into building and maintaining trusting relations with parents and carers. This means that concerns are identified and acted on that might have otherwise remained hidden.

Leaders make sure that all staff keep up to date with guidance to help them understand risks to which pupils might be exposed to, including those posed by online communications.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, there is variation in how sharply teaching focuses on exactly what it has been decided pupils need to know. This means that some pupils are not learning agreed subject content as soon as they are ready. Leaders should make sure that the agreed curriculum in all subjects is implemented consistently, so that pupils learn and remember even more.
- Children in early years have not been learning how to write letters, numbers and words in a systematic enough way. As a result, some children are not as confident as they could be when teachers ask them to write. Leaders should continue to check that the agreed programme of study is being used well to help children reach the high standards of writing that are expected in this school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, The Clara Grant Primary School, to be good in May 2014.

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	144699
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10213871
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	456
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Taylorson
Headteacher	Karen Symons
Website	www.claragrantsch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Clara Grant Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The Clara Grant Primary School converted to become an academy school in March 2018. When its predecessor school, also The Clara Grant Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school became part of the Boleyn Academy Trust in October 2021. The executive headteacher of the trust is working at the school alongside the headteacher and intends to continue to do so until the end of the current school year.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and geography. During each deep dive, the inspector spoke with pupils, looked at examples

of their work, visited lessons, talked to teachers and met with subject leaders. The inspector also heard some pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and chief executive officer of the trust to which the school belongs, a school improvement adviser and representatives of the school's governing body.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to behaviour, safeguarding and the school's plans for improvement.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents and staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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