

Portway Primary School

Stratford Road, Plaistow, London E13 0JW

Inspection dates

27 to 28 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is relentless in her pursuit of excellence. Her very high expectations and carefully considered actions have ensured that all pupils learn exceptionally well.
- The headteacher is extremely well supported by her leadership team. Together, they are uncompromising in their determination to give pupils the best possible education and to keep them safe.
- The trust board and governors provide excellent challenge and support. They know the school very well and hold leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Leaders have very effective systems for monitoring pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. As yet, they are not as well developed in other subjects.
- The quality of teaching and learning within the school is very strong. Staff have high expectations and an unwavering belief that pupils can and should make excellent progress.
- Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make very strong progress. Standards of attainment are high in each key stage. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders have planned a wide and interesting curriculum that is particularly successful in supporting pupils' academic and personal development.
- Pupils both value and live up to teachers' very high expectations. Their excellent behaviour in class and around the school clearly reflects their love of learning.
- Through assemblies, the wider curriculum and charitable activities, the school promotes pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The care and welfare of pupils is at the heart of the school. Parents and carers who spoke with inspectors felt that the teachers in school were there for their children and were readily available to talk to should they need help or support.
- The early years provision gives children an excellent start to their education. Children quickly settle and gain confidence. They achieve well and are extremely well prepared for key stage 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the highly effective systems for checking achievement in reading, writing and mathematics across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a very strong vision for the school. Their determination to ensure that pupils make as much progress as possible, both academically and personally, underpins all that they do.
- The very strong partnership between the trust, the governing body and the school has led to a highly accurate understanding of key priorities. They identify clear areas for development based on careful analysis of pupils' progress and needs. They set demanding targets and closely monitor the progress and impact of their actions.
- Leaders have a highly effective system for monitoring pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics. This enables them to quickly identify any pupil who starts to fall behind and respond promptly with additional support or challenge. Leaders are now working to ensure that the excellent procedures in place in English and mathematics are fully mirrored in other subjects.
- Leaders provide exemplary support and training to staff. Middle leaders have developed their skills and knowledge to be able to lead their subject areas very effectively. As a result, detailed curriculum plans are in place that ensure that staff can plan high-quality teaching.
- The comprehensive and well-organised school curriculum offers pupils a wide range of opportunities to learn. Pupils' enthusiasm and excitement for learning is palpable. Their mature attitudes, conscientious approach and the depth of their insight in forming questions are impressive. The development of these skills from a young age enables pupils to make outstanding progress across the school.
- There is clear ambition among staff to enable pupils to become the very best people they can be. There is a focus on mutual respect, working together, developing curiosity, building highly successful relationships and making excellent progress academically. Each pupil spoken to by inspectors demonstrated that this ambition is being realised, for pupils of all ages. This contributes to their developing understanding of British values.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and trips add to pupils' experience in the classroom. As a result, pupils have many opportunities to pursue their interests in sport, drama, music, and art and design. Pupils learn about the cultures, beliefs and views of others, and they understand why they should do so.
- Leaders have a deep understanding of individual barriers to learning, the progress of disadvantaged pupils and the next steps they need to take. This enables additional funding to be used very effectively to target support to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, make strong progress across their time in school.
- The assistant headteacher for inclusion has a thorough understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and puts considered support in place. She provided clear evidence of how this support has improved pupils'

progress and their wider engagement with school life. Leaders utilise the additional funding for pupils with SEND well.

- The prudent use of the physical education and sport funding has enabled the school to employ specialist sports staff to deliver a wide range of extra clubs and activities, both at lunchtime and after school.
- Parents are very positive about the work of the school. They are appreciative of how well the school supports their children, including those children with SEND. As one parent commented, 'The school has provided a safe & supportive environment for my daughter. This has been achieved through excellent teaching, creativity and innovation, alongside outstanding, focused leadership.'

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is shared by the trust and the local governing body. The trust and governors are highly ambitious for the school and fully share the headteacher's exceptional vision and direction.
- Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's work because the headteacher keeps them well informed, and also because they check assiduously for themselves. They are forthright in their challenge to leaders, especially about pupils' achievement, and they follow their questions with further visits to the school to review progress.
- Governors keep close checks to ensure that the primary school physical education and sport funding and the pupil premium funding are spent successfully to improve provision and outcomes for pupils.
- The regular audits carried out by the trust leadership and school improvement board on the quality of provision within school and on pupils' progress enable them to hold school leaders to account very effectively.

Safeguarding

- The school leadership team, trust and governors have ensured that the school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding. This includes robust checks carried out on all adults to ensure their suitability for working with children.
- Leaders ensure that staff and governors receive up-to-date training on a range of safeguarding issues. Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of safeguarding policies and practices.
- Leaders and teachers, at all levels, show a continual vigilance for pupil welfare and see intervention and safeguarding as the cornerstone of their work. The actions they take have a significantly positive effect on the well-being of children and families. The support they provide for the most vulnerable pupils is exceptional.
- Through the work of the family liaison officer and the family support worker, the school actively reaches out to the local community to provide care and support for pupils and families. In many cases, the school acts as a crucial link between families and other support services. Leaders keep careful records so that actions agreed with external agencies are implemented effectively to support the needs of vulnerable pupils.

- Pupils feel safe in school and value the support of teachers and other adults. Leaders ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet and when travelling to and from school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Highly effective teaching motivates pupils to achieve very well. As a result, pupils make substantial and sustained progress across a broad range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning because teachers have high expectations of their achievement. Relationships are strong, and pupils are quick to settle to their learning. Pupils enjoy the challenges to their thinking and are fully engaged in lessons.
- Teachers have equally high expectations of all pupils. Teachers have an in-depth knowledge of individual pupils and accurately identify barriers to learning. This means that teachers make sure that pupils get any additional help and resources that they need to overcome any difficulties. Learning support assistants use their detailed knowledge and expertise to support pupils to be successful in gaining confidence and developing independence in their learning. This results in pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils making positive, and often very strong, progress from their individual starting points.
- The teaching of phonics is very effective. Teachers follow the chosen phonics scheme closely, modelling the sounds made by combinations of letters accurately. This results in pupils using their phonics skills confidently to read unfamiliar words, support their spelling and develop impressive writing skills.
- Pupils enjoy reading because teachers promote reading for pleasure. Pupils read regularly, both in school and at home. Teachers are very successful in teaching pupils the skills and strategies they need to understand texts, including the demanding texts read by the most able pupils. Consequently, pupils achieve highly in reading and make very strong progress. They develop the reading skills needed to have access to the wider curriculum.
- Teachers use the school's chosen marking and feedback system to identify pupils' next steps in learning, and to identify and correct misunderstandings. Pupils respond to the insightful feedback provided by teachers and make strong gains in knowledge, skills and understanding as a result.
- In mathematics, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to explore mathematical concepts in depth. Pupils learn exceptionally well how to reason and solve complex problems. They also use the language of mathematics very well when discussing their reasoning.
- Highly effective teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics enables pupils to make strong gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Physical education teaching develops a range of skills and opportunities for pupils to experience a variety of sports. Pupils learn Mandarin and enthusiastically practise what they have learned in speaking, listening and writing activities. Interesting themes provide the context for pupils to develop their understanding and skills in history, geography and art.

- Homework is regular and supports the learning which takes place in the classroom. Pupils are clear about the purpose of homework and the basic skills it encourages them to practise.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' well-being and welfare are given as high a priority as their academic achievement. Leaders and governors recognise that pupils' well-being and welfare are essential foundations for academic progress. Leaders have devoted the necessary resources and time to ensure that there are high levels of pastoral care that allow pupils to grow in confidence and flourish.
- Teachers and other adults use their detailed knowledge of pupils to ensure that pupils get the support they need when they experience difficult times. Pupils are confident to share any concerns that they have and know that adults will deal with them quickly. The school's family support worker and family liaison officer provide welcome support to pupils and their families. Leaders ensure that, when necessary, they draw on support from other organisations and specialist services to provide support to pupils and their families. As a result, pupils feel very well cared for.
- Pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful towards each other, staff and visitors. Through the 'Portway Pledge' and the '5Cs' of Care, Courtesy, Cooperation, Commitment and Consideration, pupils live up to the very high expectations set by leaders. Pupils are enthusiastic and conscientious in their approach to their learning.
- Pupils undertake a wide range of responsibilities very sensibly and with great pride. Prefects, members of the pupils' parliament, eco warriors, junior librarians, digital leaders, play leaders and the writers and editors of Portway Post carry out their duties diligently and develop excellent leadership skills. This prepares them extremely well to be responsible citizens of the future.
- Pupils report that instances of bullying are extremely rare and those that do occur are resolved. This was confirmed by the school's records of bullying and racist or derogatory language. Pupils are confident that there are systems in place that deal quickly with any concerns that they have.
- Pupils who are new to the school are made welcome and, as a result, quickly become part of this inclusive and harmonious school community. Pupils become confident, eager learners who want to achieve the best that they possibly can. They leave Portway Primary feeling very well prepared for secondary school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Teachers set high expectations and encourage positive behaviours and routines from the early years onwards. Pupils work very well together and regularly discuss their thoughts with other pupils to develop ideas and check their reasoning.

- Pupils' conduct is exemplary in lessons, at playtime and while moving around the school. They regulate their own behaviour and support others around them to do the same. As one Year 6 pupil commented, 'Everyone thinks about each other.'
- Attendance overall is in line with national averages over time. Where any persistent absence occurs, close work with families and other agencies takes place to effectively bring about improvement.
- A small number of pupils with SEND attend specialist off-site alternative provision. Regular liaison with providers ensures that pupils' academic as well as social and emotional needs are met and that their personal development and well-being are promoted.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- In 2018, at the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above the national average, putting the school in the top 10% nationally.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average in 2018. The proportions of key stage 1 pupils working at greater depth in these subjects were also well above the national averages.
- In each key stage and across the curriculum, current pupils are making very strong progress. Pupils' books, displays around the school and discussions with pupils clearly demonstrate this. Learning is well matched to pupils' individual abilities and provides the right level of challenge.
- The most able pupils make strong progress because teachers use assessment information to plan activities that provide stretch and challenge. Pupils are required to demonstrate deep understanding, which means they constantly aim to improve their work and attain the higher standards.
- The quality of writing is strong across the school. Pupils show confidence in their use of vocabulary and in their ability to use a range of sentence structures for effect. Handwriting is neat, and pupils take a demonstrable pride in their work.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics is above national figures. These skills help pupils to become fluent readers very quickly. Pupils across the school enjoy reading. The well-stocked library enables pupils to choose from a wide range of books, and they very confidently talk about their favourite authors.
- The progress that disadvantaged pupils make is excellent, with many making better progress than other pupils nationally, across the school. This is due to highly effective support carefully matched to pupils' needs and rigour around how this support is checked and adapted accordingly over time.
- Because leaders carefully check pupils' progress and provide effective support, pupils with SEND make strong progress socially, emotionally and academically from their starting points. Pupils leave school very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- School leaders' high aspirations and expectations apply as strongly to the early years as they do to the rest of the school. They are shared by all those who work in Nursery and Reception and are evident in the quality of education that is provided for children.
- The early years leader has an accurate view of the strengths of the provision and what can be improved further. She works closely with colleagues to ensure that all those who work with children know them well.
- Children are kept safe and are well cared for. Safeguarding in the early years is effective. All statutory requirements are met.
- A large proportion of children join the school with skills that are lower than those typical for their age. Because of highly effective teaching, learning and assessment, children make outstanding progress. The proportion of children who attain a good level of development by the end of Reception is consistently above the national average. They develop the skills and attitudes that support their learning when they move into Year 1.
- Teachers check children's progress precisely, enabling them to adjust the learning to better suit individual needs. Disadvantaged children and those with SEND are nurtured well and make progress in line with others. Carefully targeted activities ensure that the most able children achieve their potential.
- Children's work in books is of high quality and shows excellent progress. Early reading, writing and number skills are well developed so that children achieve outcomes that are above national figures. The vibrant indoor and outdoor learning areas support the breadth of the curriculum very well and stimulate children to think about their learning. As a result, children start Year 1 as confident learners.
- Teachers and learning support assistants develop children's enthusiasm for reading from an early stage. Pupils quickly learn the links between letters and sounds and explore this in their reading and writing.
- Children's behaviour in early years is exemplary. Adults model how children should behave and communicate with one another extremely well. Children respond to adults' high expectations of behaviour. Excellent relationships are evident in the way children play and learn with one another and with adults.
- Parents are delighted with how quickly their children settle into school and with the excellent progress they make. They find staff to be friendly and approachable. As one parent put it, 'The staff make every effort to make the learning fun and purposeful. My daughter has made great progress since starting and has grown in confidence. The nursery is fantastic, and the staff are brilliant.'

School details

Unique reference number	142632
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10088848

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	510
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Jennifer Rhodes
Headteacher	Jacqueline Waine
Telephone number	020 8472 7142
Website	portway.leadinglearningtrust.org
Email address	info@leadinglearningtrust.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Portway Primary School is a larger than the average-sized primary school and is in the London Borough of Newham.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2015.
- The school converted to an academy in May 2016, joining the Leading Learning Trust, a multi-academy trust. The academy trust is governed by a trust board. The trustees have established a local governing body for each of their schools.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than that found in most primary schools.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site provision at Eleanor Smith School, Newham and Newham pupil referral unit, RIET.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in a range of lessons and parts of lessons across the school. The majority of these were carried out jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or the CEO of the multi-academy trust.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, the SENCo, the early years leader, members of the safeguarding team, members of the governing body, middle leaders, newly qualified teachers and the chief executive officer of Leading Learning Trust.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with the chair of the school improvement board which advises the trust and monitors the performance of the trust schools.
- The inspection team observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, when moving to and from lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils drawn from different classes. In addition, inspectors spoke informally with pupils in lessons and around the school.
- An inspector listened to the reading of a small group of pupils from Years 2 and 4. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work from all year groups.
- Inspectors considered the 72 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, and the 19 free-text comments submitted by parents. Inspectors also spoke to parents in the school playground.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of school documents and policies, including behaviour and attendance information, information about pupils' achievement, minutes of governing body meetings and documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Carolyn Dickinson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sue Brooks	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Flesher	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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