

Inspection of Richard Cobden Primary School

Camden Street, London NW1 0LL

Inspection dates: 16–17 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy here. They told us that all the adults who work with them are kind and helpful. The nurturing spirit of the school helps pupils to excel in all aspects of school life.

Pupils feel safe. They know that bullying is not tolerated. If bullying were to happen, pupils know exactly where to turn for support. Pupils' behaviour is excellent too, in classrooms and at playtimes. Pupils know that behaving sensibly helps them to get the most of their education.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils rise to this challenge. In lessons, teachers want pupils to do their very best. Pupils know this. They feel that staff do all that they can to help them to be successful. Pupils particularly appreciate the way staff help them if they get stuck or find their work challenging.

The work which pupils produce is of the highest quality across all subjects. Displays in classrooms and corridors celebrate this. Leaders, staff and pupils are rightly proud of the learning that takes place here.

Many parents and carers told us that they travel a long way to bring their children to this school. Parents value the great care given to their children and how staff encourage their children to aim high.

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

Leaders run a very caring school. They make sure that pupils are 'heard, understood and valued' as individuals. At the same time, leaders' ambitions for pupils are very high. All staff work together with a shared aim to provide an exceptional education. They expect the best of their pupils. This encourages pupils' strong commitment to their own learning. Children settle quickly into the early years. It is an exciting place to learn. Staff plan learning carefully. Their expectations for children are as high as those found in the rest of the school.

Plans for all subjects build towards ambitious end points. They reflect leaders' determination that all pupils will achieve to the very best of their abilities. Leaders know exactly how well pupils learn in each subject. They continually find ways to strengthen pupils' achievement. They provide additional support to help any pupil who is falling behind, particularly in reading.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive excellent support. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND learn the same full range of subjects as other pupils. They adapt work to meet pupils' needs. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve highly.

Teachers have an in-depth knowledge of the subjects they teach. They are skilled at

using subject plans so that all pupils build successfully on what they have already learned. This includes pupils with SEND. Teachers follow a carefully thought-through order so that new subject matter and concepts build on pupils' existing knowledge. They make sure that pupils understand and master new knowledge, including in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that pupils use key concepts with confidence.

Leaders and staff place great importance on developing pupils' communication skills. Teachers are excellent role models in their careful use of language. They introduce pupils purposefully to important words and motivate them to use them so that they build up a rich vocabulary. Pupils use subject-specific words accurately when they discuss their learning. This is particularly helpful for pupils who speak English as an additional language and who are at the early stages of fluency in English.

Reading has a high priority from the start of the early years. Adults read stories to children very regularly. They use songs and rhyme to bring books to life. This helps children to acquire and use new words quickly and accurately, particularly those who are at the early stages of building fluency in spoken English. Children in Nursery and Reception have a clear love of books. During the day, children choose to sit in the reading areas and share books with one another.

Early reading skills are taught securely in the early years and Years 1 and 2. Staff make sure that pupils read books that match the letters and phonics sounds that they know. Pupils take reading books home to practise what they have been taught in class. Leaders encourage parents to support their children's learning at home. Staff provide parents with plenty of opportunities to get involved in their children's learning. Parents appreciate this. Teachers make sure that pupils who fall behind with their reading catch up quickly. Pupils who join the school part way through the early years or Years 1 and 2 and who are new to reading receive tailored support.

Teachers organise interesting outings to parks and museums. Pupils develop and celebrate their talents through learning to play musical instruments, taking part in musical performances and competing in sports competitions, such as tag rugby, athletics and dodgeball, with other schools. Pupils enjoy the many popular clubs on offer, such as computer programming. All pupils have access to these activities, with no one being left out.

Pupils' attitudes are highly positive. Classrooms are calm and orderly places where pupils and teachers focus on learning without disruption. This helps pupils to achieve as well as they do. Children in the early years play and work together well. They share resources and want to help one another. Children develop the attitudes and knowledge they need to get off to the best possible start in Year 1.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. Pupils spoke to us in detail about the religions they had studied. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to respect the views and beliefs of others.

Leaders provide staff with training and strong support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Regular training ensures that all staff are vigilant to any safeguarding issues. They know the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff report concerns and leaders act immediately to safeguard pupils' welfare. Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to protect any pupils who may be at risk from harm. They also make sure that the suitability of adults who work in or visit the school is carefully checked. Teachers help pupils of all ages to learn how to recognise potentially unsafe situations. They encourage pupils to use the internet safely and to speak up if they see something that worries them.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	100022
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10110169
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Deborah Isaacs
Headteacher	Kathy Bannon
Website	www.rcobden.camden.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	5 December 2008

Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The school runs a learning centre that provides courses in English and mathematics for parents of pupils in the early years and Years 1 and 2.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We held meetings with members of the school's leadership team.
- We met with members of the governing body and an adviser from the local authority.
- We did deep dives into the following subjects: reading, mathematics, music, physical education and geography. Inspectors met with the leaders of each

subject, visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. We listened to pupils read. We also considered pupils' learning in other subjects.

- We looked at information related to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. We held meetings with leaders to discuss safeguarding and pastoral care. We also reviewed the checks leaders make on adults who work in the school.
- We met with pupils to discuss their experiences at the school, including how safe and well looked after pupils feel.
- We gathered the views of parents through Ofsted's Parent View online survey. We also spoke to parents on the morning of the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Tim McLoughlin, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Jaeggi	Ofsted Inspector
Sukwinder Samra	Ofsted Inspector

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