

Friars Primary Foundation School

Webber Street, Blackfriars, London SE1 0RF

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong leadership, has accurately identified areas for further development and is effectively working to improve them.
- The school has a warm and caring family atmosphere in which each child is known and valued as an individual.
- Good teaching in the early years foundation stage leads to good achievement.
- Teaching across the school is consistently good and leads to good progress for all pupils. Staff use questioning well and assess pupils' work regularly.
- The range of subjects and activities offered to pupils is a strength of the school's work.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and they are enthusiastic about their school.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and pupils understand the importance of being kind and caring to each other.
- Pupils say that they feel safe because of the excellent care and support from staff.
- Parents and carers are positive about how the school supports their children in their learning.
- Governors know the school well and they have a secure understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement, using accurate information from senior leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further by:
 - sharing examples of outstanding practice more widely across the school
 - ensuring that staff plan activities that provide greater challenge for the most able pupils, and accelerate their progress in mathematics
 - refining professional development provided to staff to ensure that it is further personalised to meet the individual teacher's needs
- Ensure that all middle leaders have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to drive improvements and evaluate the impact of their actions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and other leaders in school and governors have worked together effectively to create a school focused on bringing about the improvements necessary following the previous inspection. They identified what needed to change and have taken action to improve achievement and the quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and where further work is required. There is an accurate self-evaluation, using data about pupils' progress, to plan for improvement across the school.
- They are careful in tracking pupils' achievements and make regular checks on pupils' books and on how well they are learning in lessons. They have a good understanding of the progress of different groups, including those who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, putting in place appropriate and effective support programmes that help these pupils to make good rates of progress.
- This work has led to an improvement in pupils' achievement throughout the school. For example, the proportion of children in early years achieving a good level of development has been above the national average for the last two years and this trend is set to continue.
- Middle leaders have received training recently relating to their role and responsibilities in monitoring the standards in their subjects. There has not yet been sufficient time to demonstrate the effectiveness of some of this, and they have not yet evaluated the impact of their work.
- The school ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. There are also additional opportunities for pupils to learn instruments and watch performances.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of sporting opportunities as a result of the additional funding for primary physical education (PE) and sport. The school employs external sports coaches who provide after-school and physical education provision. This has led to an increase in the number of pupils that participate in sports clubs, as well as to an effective improvement of teachers' skills in teaching PE.
- The school works well with parents, including those who might find working with the school difficult, to achieve positive benefits for pupils. Parents appreciate the work of the school and how well it caters for the individual needs of each of their children.
- The local authority knows the school well and works well to ensure that the school is supported where necessary, to drive improvements. Expertise of staff within the school is also used by the local authority to effect improvements in other schools.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and support leaders to strengthen this through their challenging questions. They are knowledgeable about its strengths and areas for improvement.
- Many governors are regular visitors to the school, so the governing body has an accurate understanding of its strengths and what the school needs to do to improve further. They help school leaders to decide on priorities for improvement and they check that the plans to improve the school are working. They also have a good understanding of what data on pupils' performance tells them about how well the school is doing.
- The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's finances. This includes being aware of how extra funding, for example from the pupil premium, is being spent.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are securely in place and risk assessments cover all aspects of school activities, including educational visits.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are consistently well implemented by all staff. The school works well with parents to maintain a safe and welcoming school environment.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now slightly below the national average. The school is vigilant in checking that any pupils who are not in school are safe.
- Pupils learn about road safety and how to keep themselves and others safe in a variety of different situations. E-safety is given a high profile, so that pupils know what they need to do to keep themselves safe while they are using the internet.
- The school's leaders are effective in ensuring consistent monitoring of pupils who are deemed to be vulnerable and provide the necessary support where needed to these pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved. This is because teachers know their pupils well, and they plan work that helps pupils of all abilities to make good, and sometimes rapid, progress. Relationships are a particular strength of the school, so that pupils want to do well and take accountability for their own learning.
- Each half term, teachers check pupils' progress through tests or assessments. They use this knowledge about what pupils have achieved to plan exciting and challenging learning activities. However, the most able pupils are not always stretched sufficiently for them to make the maximum progress in lessons, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers provide pupils with clear explanations on how to improve their work so that the vast majority know how to achieve their very best. Standards of writing across the school are particularly high.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are included fully in lessons and are supported well in their learning. They also benefit from working in small groups where necessary. The positive relationships between adults and pupils promote pupils' confidence and belief in themselves. As a result, they become resilient and resourceful in overcoming barriers to their learning and personal development.
- Pupils' test results, and their skills books and extended writing books show that pupils are developing in their knowledge and understanding effectively. Teachers have high expectations.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and ask questions that help pupils to work things out for themselves. They are good at finding ways to clarify things, especially where pupils are having difficulty, to help them speed up their learning.
- Teachers use their questioning skills well to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in their lessons. This is successfully achieved through targeting appropriate questions to specific year groups.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils show that they enjoy school by their eagerness to do well in lessons and their enthusiasm for the wide range of additional activities offered.
- Pupils of all backgrounds form excellent relationships with adults and peers. They feel very safe in school and are clear that they would turn to an adult if they had any concerns.
- The school provides a very nurturing and orderly learning environment where the focus on learning and well-being is strong. Pupils' work is highly valued and celebrated through attractive displays, which pupils say helps them to try hard and raises their aspirations.
- Pupils readily take on a range of responsibilities and make an excellent contribution to making decisions, for example about lunchtime activities, where peer mediators are responsible for resolving low-level conflict situations.
- Pupils are aware of and can recognise different types of bullying, and are able to explain what needs to be done when they encounter these.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils are courteous and confident. They collaborate well and are enthusiastic learners. In the playground, pupils of all ages mix happily and play imaginatively with interesting and adventurous equipment at lunchtimes, ensuring that no one is left out. As one pupil commented, 'We are all different, but equal in our treatment of each other.'

- Pupils' excellent behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and their high levels of independence and social responsibility make a strong contribution to the school as a whole and to their own success. Pupils are confident in the high level of care provided to them by various members of staff.
- Pupils say that they like coming to school, and this has encouraged them to attend regularly and on time. Attendance has improved and the number of persistent absences has greatly reduced. Attendance is still slightly below the national average. However, the school is working closely with families who find it a challenge to ensure that their children attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The majority of pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Pupils' underachievement is being successfully addressed. Throughout the school, pupils' work and the school's assessments of their achievements show a positive trend in improvement.
- Differences in the attainment and progress of girls and boys in key stage 2 in English and mathematics in the national tests in 2017 were specific to this year group. Pupils currently in Year 6, especially the girls, are performing as well as boys. Progress for this group is also strong from the pupils' starting points.
- Attainment at key stage 1 has been slightly below the national average for boys in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the improved quality of teaching, learning and assessment is having a positive impact. Work in books and the school's accurate assessment data for the current Year 2 pupils indicate that pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Most boys are on track to achieve broadly in line with the national average by the end of the year. This represents good achievement for this group of pupils based on their starting points at the end of their early years' experience.
- Pupils in Year 1 develop their skills in phonics well. In 2017, they achieved levels above those nationally in the Year 1 phonics check.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception and start Year 1 with standards that are expected for this age group. However, girls did not achieve as well as boys in 2017.
- Children's skills when they start in Nursery are below, and sometimes well below, what is typical for their age, particularly in reading, writing and numeracy.
- Good teaching helps all children in the Nursery and Reception class to make good progress. Staff use their good understanding of children's achievements and what they need to learn next in each area of learning. Children develop the ability to learn independently or in partnership with others.
- Behaviour and attitudes in the Nursery and Reception classes are good and the children settle to their work quickly and happily. This helps them to make good

progress. They make friends and are confident in their work. Parents are welcomed as partners in their children's learning.

- Leaders check on the effectiveness of their work so that they know the strengths and areas that need to improve. They have ensured that there are effective systems in place to track children's progress and to plan new learning.
- Both indoors and outdoors, adults create a stimulating environment, which engages children and makes them to want to play and learn. Children quickly develop a love of school and of learning.
- Parents unanimously praise the way their children have developed in the Nursery and Reception classes. They feel well informed about their children's learning. The effective partnership between home and school about individual achievements supports ongoing learning well.
- The good support given to children who have SEN and/or disabilities helps them in whole-class sessions and in individual or group activities.

School details

Unique reference number	100855
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10048147

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Hinchliffe
Headteacher	Justin Burtt
Telephone number	0207 207 1807
Website	www.friars.southwark.sch.uk
Email address	justinburtt@friars.southwark.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 June 2015

Information about this school

- Friars Primary Foundation School is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classrooms, as well as observing intervention groups.
- School leaders took part in joint observations with inspectors and attended all inspection team meetings.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, teachers and groups of pupils. Inspectors met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors worked in partnership with the school's senior leaders when analysing information about the school. The inspectors looked at pupils' outcomes, the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes from governors' meetings, the school development plan, and monitoring and evaluation records. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspectors walked around the school with pupils to find out more about their work from displays and extra-curricular activities. Inspectors also interviewed groups of children from across the school to determine their views on behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors spent time on the playground at playtime, observed behaviour in the lunch halls, listened to pupils read and looked at work in pupils' books, alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents by analysing the 15 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as speaking informally to parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Danvir Visvanathan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Donovan

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