

# Inspection of a good school: Lowther Primary School

Stillingfleet Road, Barnes, London SW13 9AE

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Inspection dates:

10 and 11 January 2023

## **Outcome**

Lowther Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are very happy and safe here. They achieve well and take pride in being a part of the 'Lowther family'. Pupils are confident that staff will help them if they have any concerns or worries. There is a sense of community where pupils and adults feel that they truly belong.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They support pupils to follow the school's behaviour rules of being 'ready, respectful, safe'. Across the school, pupils behave consistently well in and out of lessons. They are confident, articulate and courteous. On any rare occasions when bullying occurs, staff deal with it promptly and effectively.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the work of staff. They said that leaders ensure that every pupil is supported and encouraged to be their best.

Leaders provide pupils with a vast range of wider opportunities. They have established strong links with a local secondary school. Through this, pupils can use the specialist science laboratories, sports facilities and geography resources, for example. There is also a wide selection of after-school clubs on offer, and pupils' take-up of these activities is high.

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

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of early reading. Staff are well trained to deliver phonics teaching. Pupils get plenty of well-planned opportunities to practise their phonic knowledge. They read books that contain sounds that they already know. Staff check regularly how well pupils are learning phonics. They identify pupils who are falling behind in their early reading. Staff support these pupils effectively, including through extra sessions, enabling them to catch up quickly.

Pupils show keen interest in the books that they are reading. They also get to hear adults read to them daily. Leaders, supported by parent volunteers, have refurbished the library, so that it is an even more inviting place to read books.

Staff hear pupils read regularly. Sometimes, however, adults do not correct pupils when they mispronounce some sounds. When this happens, pupils find it difficult to blend sounds together to read words correctly. This affects their fluency when reading.

Leaders have put in place a well-considered curriculum. They ensure that pupils gain important knowledge across all subjects. Teachers check pupils' knowledge and understanding carefully. They adapt their teaching to close any gaps and clarify misconceptions. This helps pupils to learn a deep body of knowledge in a range of subjects. Leaders build sequentially on children's early understanding in Reception. For example, teachers encourage children to use the language of position and direction. These foundations help pupils later on in their learning, for example when locating countries on a globe.

Teachers present new concepts clearly. They choose effective resources to support the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Across subjects, pupils are confident in using subject-specific vocabulary. In mathematics, for example, pupils use precise mathematical language when talking about the properties of numbers.

Leaders work alongside parents and external agencies to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) swiftly. Leaders support teachers to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of these pupils. Pupils with SEND benefit from support from highly skilled adults who know how to help them to access the planned curriculum fully.

Pupils participate actively in discussions and work hard on the tasks that they are set. Disruptions to learning are rare. Pupils remain focused during lessons.

Leaders provide pupils with many wider opportunities to develop beyond the academic curriculum. For example, pupils elect school council representatives, who contribute ideas for making the school better. Pupils also enjoy taking part in inter-school sports competitions. Leaders aim to foster pupils' creativity through organising participation in many different musical and singing festivals, including with other schools.

Staff said that leaders are approachable. Staff are happy to be a part of this school and appreciate leaders' support, including with managing workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know their pupils and families well. They are vigilant and quick to spot signs that might indicate that pupils are at risk. Leaders ensure that recording and reporting procedures are clear and effective. They act on any concerns promptly. Leaders work closely with external agencies to support families.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe at school, at home or when online. Leaders have created many opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to learn about how to stay safe. For example, staff teach pupils about consent in an age-appropriate way.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Sometimes, pupils mispronounce letter sounds, and adults do not correct them as promptly as they could. When this happens, pupils struggle to blend sounds together to read words accurately. As a result, pupils' reading fluency is hampered. Leaders need to ensure that staff identify these misconceptions promptly and address them as they occur.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

## **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.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102892
<b>Local authority</b>	Richmond upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240400
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	316
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sharon McNab
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Tuffney
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lowther.richmond.sch.uk">www.lowther.richmond.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- School leaders do not use any 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.

- In inspecting safeguarding, the inspector carried out a scrutiny of the school's single central record of pre-employment checks as well as other records.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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