

Inspection of Phoenix Primary School

Marlborough Grove, London SE1 5JT

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 June 2025

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Phoenix Primary School cultivates a culture where pupils are expected to thrive and inspired to work hard. Pupils rightly take great pride in their many accomplishments. They flourish in this highly ambitious, safe and inclusive community. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support and guidance that they need to be highly successful.

The curriculum is well designed and ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. This ensures that pupils are fully engaged in their learning and achieve highly. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and shines through in the happy and respectful interactions that they have with their peers and staff. This is because the school sets consistently high expectations, from early years onwards, that pupils are eager to meet. Pupils learn the importance of the school values, including 'kindness and politeness'. They are proud to be 'polite platypuses' and 'kind koalas'.

The extensive range of wider experiences is carefully considered to enhance pupils' learning and encourage them to be ambitious about their futures. Talents are quickly identified and nurtured so that the unique strengths of pupils are celebrated. Pupils are keen to explore new possibilities, and no pupil misses out.

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

The curriculum is highly ambitious and goes beyond what is expected nationally. The school has identified precisely what it expects all pupils to learn and when. This begins in early years, where knowledge, skills and vocabulary are carefully sequenced so that pupils master concepts progressively. For example, in music, children in early years are given the opportunity to adapt the lyrics of familiar songs, gradually building their confidence in composing and creating new pieces. This foundational skill is further developed later in the school, where pupils begin to transform word patterns into rhythmic compositions.

Staff are expertly trained and use their secure subject knowledge to model learning with accuracy and precision. Teachers regularly check pupils' learning. This ensures that any errors and misconceptions are swiftly identified and addressed. As a result, learning is securely embedded so that pupils achieve highly. Published outcomes, for example, are significantly above national averages. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Staff know their pupils well and are swift to identify any additional needs. Staff make meaningful adaptations to the curriculum when required. This ensures that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers whenever this is possible. Any pupils that fall behind are given additional support to help them get back on track quickly. All pupils, including those with SEND, are nurtured to be confident learners.

Developing pupils' love of reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Children in the Reception Year make a swift start in learning to read. They are ably supported by expert staff, who ensure that all pupils develop strong phonics knowledge and comprehension skills. Those needing extra help are quickly identified and supported effectively. Books are closely matched to the sounds that pupils have learned, building their accuracy and confidence. The school also places an equally strong emphasis on language development. Carefully selected books and a well-designed approach to vocabulary development in different subjects enrich the curriculum.

Behaviour is a strength across the school. The curriculum and assemblies are used to reinforce expectations and what it means to behave well. Assemblies are active and exciting opportunities for pupils to engage in talk and reflection about their values as a school and how they might best demonstrate them. Pupils are regularly awarded for demonstrating the school's values through a set of animal themes. Being recognised as a 'trying tiger' or 'helpful hippo' supports their understanding of each value.

The school has carefully considered how to enhance and enrich pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural experiences. This includes diversification of the curriculum, supporting families with different backgrounds, celebrating Mother's Day in the school, theatre visits and having a live orchestra perform for the pupils.

Leaders, including governors, are highly skilled. There is a strong culture of continuous improvement, which is strengthened by the work of the federation. Staff love working at this school. They feel highly valued and are invested in all that the school stands for. Leaders are approachable and support staff's well-being and workload. As a result, staff retention is exceptionally high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and](#)

[protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100817
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10379084
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	521
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Theresa Kelly
Headteacher	Simon Assig (executive headteacher)
Website	www.mayflowerfederation.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 June 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Mayflower Federation.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders.
- Discussions were held with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, geography, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Lisa Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Abdul-Hayee Murshad	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Robinson	Ofsted Inspector

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