

Henry Fawcett Primary School

Bowling Green Street, London SE11 5BZ

Inspection dates

10–11 May 2017

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- This is a remarkable school. The quality of leadership is exceptional. The headteacher, ably supported by leaders throughout the school, is unflagging in her pursuit of excellence. As a result, the school is in the top 3% in the country for the progress made by pupils.
- The school's vision is that every pupil can and will succeed. There is a 'no-excuses' culture. The vision, summed up in the words 'yes we can', underpins the school's success. It is shared by all members of the school community, pupils and adults alike.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have improved all aspects of the school's work so that they are now outstanding.
- The quality of teaching is consistently excellent throughout the school. Adults expect the very best from the pupils. Pupils rise to the challenge and learn exceptionally well.
- In this culture, where pupils want to learn and adults want to teach, there is high-quality dialogue between these two groups. With guidance from adults, pupils contribute to their own learning. Pupils check how well they are learning and choose their own additional challenges.
- There is a strong culture of respect within the school. Pupils know that they are valued, and in turn respect others. They are responsible, mature young people, keen to help their fellow pupils. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are eager to learn. They keep their books immaculate.
- The school currently has an emphasis on improving the teaching of phonics and spelling, particularly for younger pupils. As a result, spelling is improving in key stage 1. Pupils in key stage 2 spell reasonably well, but leaders have not paid similar attention to improving pupils' spelling in key stage 2.
- Pupils' outcomes throughout the school are outstanding. Pupils in all year groups make extremely strong progress. This is also true of disadvantaged pupils, and other groups needing additional support. Pupils learn extremely well in all subjects whether they are academic, creative or physical education.
- The Nursery and Reception classes provide a wealth of stimulating activities, enabling children to make the best possible start to school. Teaching by all the adults is of the highest quality. The early years provision is a safe nurturing environment, where children learn the language, number and social skills they need to enable them to move seamlessly to the next stage of their education.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' spelling skills, particularly in key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher's vision for the school, as a place where all can succeed, has enabled the school to become outstanding and achieve national recognition. Since the previous inspection, the school has twice been commended by education ministers, most recently by the Minister of State for School Standards in February 2017. It is currently in the top 3% of schools nationally for progress. It is also the highest performing school in London when compared with similar schools.
- The headteacher's vision of excellence for all is fully shared by all stakeholders. All adults promote the highest standards. Pupils are eager to do as well as they can, and to help others. The school's atmosphere is calm, orderly and welcoming. Parents and staff show in their responses to the Ofsted survey and in conversation with inspectors that they are proud of the school.
- The headteacher receives strong support from her senior team and from subject leaders, together with those responsible for other aspects of the school's work. All share her drive for improvement. Governors are vigilant in holding leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work.
- Staff are highly motivated to succeed because they too share in the school's vision of excellence. They take full advantage of the many opportunities offered by leaders to develop their skills. There is excellent dialogue between leaders and staff. A typical comment from one member of staff was, 'I am incredibly impressed by the effort that is put in on a daily basis by the whole team. It is a pleasure to be part of such a close-knit team.'
- Leaders engage successfully with parents. Leaders provide many opportunities for parents to learn ways of helping their children. Close links with the children's centre on site ensure that leaders begin the task of understanding and supporting families long before children start in the early years provision.
- Leaders ensure that pupils understand British values, such as tolerance and the rule of law. The many opportunities pupils have to take responsibility and to help others enable them to understand the world in which they live and to take their place confidently within it.
- The curriculum is key to producing excellent outcomes for the pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, and nurtures pupils' personal development. The shaping of the curriculum is testament to the headteacher's thoughtful and individual approach to leading the school. She understands the importance of cultivating the whole child. As a result, the curriculum covers a breadth of topics, all of which are used to stimulate excellent learning in writing, art work and music. For example, the school's drama production of 'The Lion King' enabled pupils, under the guidance of a professional artist, to make gigantic animal masks of a high quality. Such opportunities make a strong contribution to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities for children to play instruments and join in London-wide music making. Pupils are given every opportunity to experience nature by growing fruit, flowers and herbs. Several parents who spoke to inspectors praised the wide range of after-school clubs. All these opportunities are carefully planned by leaders to broaden pupils' experiences and to raise their aspirations. One pupil told an inspector that he valued what he learned at school because it helped him to prepare for going to university.
- Leaders and governors make excellent use of additional government funding. Their wise choices enable disadvantaged pupils to outperform all pupils nationally. Additional funding enables pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to receive the right support, so that they make similar outstanding progress to others in the school.
- Leaders and governors make highly effective use of the additional government funding for primary physical education and sport. They ensure that the funding is targeted at providing a wide range of sporting activities. These attract new participants, keen to try out such activities as dance and gymnastics. Sports coaches train other adults at the school to deliver high-quality sports provision to ensure that the benefits of the funding are sustained in the future.

Governance of the school

- Governors carry out their statutory duties with exemplary thoroughness.
- Governors share leaders' vision of excellence and drive for continual improvement.
- Governors know the school well, visiting it often and seeing its work for themselves. They provide high-quality reports on their findings, which they share with other governors.
- Written records of governors' meetings show that governors ask searching questions and hold the school's leaders to account.
- Governors make wise choices in using additional government funding successfully to improve the life chances of those eligible for support.
- Governors are keen to improve their own skills. They have undertaken training in governance. They are well trained in ways of keeping children and adults safe at the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a culture of safety in the school that all members of the community understand and share.
- Checks on those who work with children are scrupulous.
- Before pupils are taken out on trips and visits, all risks are comprehensively assessed.
- Staff and governors are very well trained in keeping children safe. They are trained to identify signs of possible extremism and to check for potential risks of female genital mutilation.

- The school works in highly effective partnership with the local authority to take the right actions to support any child at risk.
- Leaders engage successfully with parents, ensuring that they and all members of the school community understand how to keep pupils safe. Pupils and parents agree that the school is a safe place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching is consistently high.
- Adults have the highest possible expectations of the pupils. If one approach does not work with a particular pupil, they try another. No pupil is overlooked, and consequently all make exceptional progress in their time at the school.
- Adults set pupils tasks that challenge them. Once a pupil masters a topic, he or she can extend learning by choosing additional challenges. Pupils move their own learning forward, guided by the adults. There is useful dialogue between adults and pupils, resulting in a calm and purposeful learning culture. During one Year 3 science task, for example, pupils were busy labelling pictures of human bones before assembling a skeleton. Pupils were then encouraged to deepen their investigation by considering questions such as, 'Why do we have a skeleton?' and, 'Which of our organs are protected by bones?'
- The curriculum, devised by the school to meet the needs of its pupils, makes a strong contribution to enabling the highest quality of learning to take place. For example, in one Year 6 session, pupils were encouraged to think about the needs of others by considering what is meant by empathy. One pupil showed perfect understanding by answering, 'Empathy is when you put yourself in someone else's shoes'. Such sensitive teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly.
- Leaders have given considerable thought to promoting learning for the most able and for groups that might otherwise fall behind in their learning. Leaders plan the allocation of staff effectively, making arrangements that are well tailored to the needs of the pupils within the school. For example, three teachers are deployed flexibly across several of the year groups. This cooperative arrangement promotes highly effective individual, group and whole-class learning, so that all pupils learn exceptionally well.
- Teaching makes excellent use of questioning. Adults enable pupils to extend their learning by asking them how they intend to tackle a challenge, rather than by supplying answers. In addition, time is used effectively and pupils move quickly from task to task without loss of concentration. Pupils show their determination to learn through their exemplary behaviour and attentiveness.
- The school's emphasis on teaching phonics is particularly effective in raising the reading skills of children in the early years provision and pupils in key stage 1. In key stage 2, however, where pupils are introduced to an increasingly wide and sophisticated vocabulary, pupils sometimes struggle with correct spelling. Though in 2016 the Year 6 spelling outcomes were slightly above average, the school recognises that correct and effortless spelling is not sufficiently widespread throughout key stage 2.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The school helps to develop pupils who are confident, polite and helpful. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, described the school as 'a whole big family where we all respect each other'.
- Pupils told inspectors that they are proud of the many opportunities they have to take responsibility. For example, they like choosing their own additional challenges when they have completed a task. Inspectors confirmed that this enables them to progress faster in their learning.
- Pupils are eager to help others, for example by serving as 'learning ambassadors'. This coveted position enables pupils, who go through a careful selection process, to help the school run smoothly. Ambassadors make sure that no child is left to play alone during playtimes. As one pupil typically remarked, 'Ambassadors make sure that everyone has a smile on their face.'
- Pupils told inspectors that they have a realistic understanding of what bullying means. This enables them to say with knowledge that there is no bullying at their school. Pupils' commonly held view was that if any bullying were to happen, 'it would let the whole school down'.
- Pupils feel safe and protected at school. Those who attend the breakfast club and the after-school care provision have a settled start and end to their day. Pupils of all ages are deeply engrossed in reading their storybooks, helping them to unwind at the end of a busy day of learning.
- The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, particularly when out and about. They are taught about potential dangers of talking to adults, and about risks from cyber bullying. Pupils reported that they know exactly whom to talk to if they have any concern when using computers, whether in school or at home.
- Lunchtime arrangements are civilised. Pupils eat at round tables, enabling them to chat with a group of fellow pupils, using proper plates and cutlery, with jugs of water on every table. There is a healthy salad bar, supervised by pupils, to encourage others to make sensible eating choices.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-discipline and are friendly, curious and delightful young people. A scrutiny of school records on behaviour show a sharp and sustained decline in the number of negative incidents. Attendance is rising, and persistent absence has fallen, indicating pupils' eagerness to attend regularly, so that they do not miss any school.
- Pupils are highly attentive in lessons. Pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that they are not distracted by others when concentrating on tasks. Inspection evidence confirms this.

- Pupils take considerable pride in their work. Their books are extremely neat. They use their books throughout lessons to refer back to their targets and check on their own progress. Pupils keep their classrooms tidy. They respect the many beautiful wall displays in classrooms and along the corridors.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils' outcomes throughout the school are consistently extremely strong. Pupils in each year group, from Nursery to Year 6, make very rapid progress. Progress is equally strong across reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects.
- Results in national assessments show the school's track record of exceptional progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6.
- The school's assessment information and pupils' work over time indicate that current pupils in Year 6 have made extremely strong progress from their starting points.
- A particular success story for the school is the exceptional achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able among them. These pupils make more progress and attain more highly than other pupils nationally. This is because leaders and governors use the additional government funding very wisely to provide highly effective support for these pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress against their own targets. This is because they receive the right support from adults who understand their needs and who work in partnership with external agencies to provide for these needs.
- The school is tireless in supporting the high proportion of pupils who arrive with little or no English. As a result, they quickly catch up and achieve extremely well.
- The school's individual approach to meeting the needs of every pupil ensures that no one is overlooked. As a result, the most able receive the additional challenge they need to make rapid progress. Pupils who might otherwise struggle to catch up also receive highly effective support to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- By the time they leave school, pupils are thoroughly prepared for the next stage of their education. They have acquired excellent skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They have also developed resilience and a love of learning that will stand them in good stead in secondary school.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have the best possible start to school at Henry Fawcett. Their learning is checked as carefully and in the same way as that of older pupils. As is the case higher up the school, there is a strong focus on teaching language and number skills through capturing the children's interest and imagination. The quality of teaching and leadership is as high as it is in the school as a whole. As a result, children are exceptionally well prepared for the move into Year 1.

- Leadership of the early years provision at all levels is outstanding. Leaders recognise the importance of establishing excellent attitudes and habits for learning from the earliest years. Leaders plan exceptionally well to promote the learning of each individual child. As a result, children make rapid progress in learning language, number and social skills from starting points that are generally below those typical for their age.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is extremely strong. All the adults make sure that children listen and speak as much as possible in order to gain fluency and widen their vocabulary. For example, children had been reading the story of 'The Enormous Turnip', and this prompted an excited response from one child, 'They pulled and heaved and yanked'.
- Activities prepared for the children promote learning well. For example, in one task, children succeeded in counting up to 14 little teacups. They were stimulated to do this almost effortlessly, because they were so captivated by watching a puppet 'make tea'. This was an activity typical of many in the early years provision, where skills are effortlessly imparted through a strong appeal to the children's imagination.
- Activities, both indoors and outdoors, stimulate learning exceptionally well. The outdoor areas are designed to promote excellent experiences for children living in an urban environment. Children take great delight in growing plants and relish the chance to get their hands deep in mud and water.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. They are so busy with the wealth of activities that they are fully engaged and happy to learn. Inspectors observed children cooperating in using the play equipment and helping to tidy the environment.
- Children are encouraged to feel part of the whole school. For example, during the inspectors' visit, pupils throughout the school were busy preparing for a design and technology event on London landmarks. The youngest children in the Nursery were constructing models from cardboard. These tasks stimulated the children's thinking and resulted in them making high-quality models.
- Children arrive at Nursery with language and number skills that are well below those typical for their age, sometimes speaking little English. Through high-quality teaching, children make very rapid progress. By the time children leave the early years provision, proportions leaving with a good level of development are in line with those typical for their age.
- Disadvantaged children eligible for support through additional funding learn as well as others. Children with a range of additional needs receive focused support and make similar progress to others.
- The school engages extremely well with parents of children in the early years. Parents are kept fully informed about how well their children are learning through attractive and informative learning journals, recording all the children's activities.

School details

Unique reference number	131874
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10008674

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	365
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caimin Collins
Headteacher	Rachel Eckford
Telephone number	020 7735 2764
Website	www.henryfawcett.org.uk
Email address	admin@henryfawcett.lambeth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2012

Information about this school

- Henry Fawcett is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is much higher than average.
- Most pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- There is a children's centre on site that is inspected separately.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school care provision.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as a one-day inspection, the purpose of which was to ascertain whether the school remained good and whether safeguarding was effective. It became clear during the day that more evidence was needed before final judgements could be made. The lead inspector was therefore joined on the second day by three more Ofsted Inspectors.
- Inspectors visited classes throughout the school and observed pupils' learning in a wide range of subjects. The headteacher and members of the senior leadership team joined inspectors on most of their classroom visits.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work. An inspector met a group of key stage 2 pupils to hear how they felt about the school. There were no responses to the Ofsted online survey of pupils' views, but inspectors considered the school's own pupil surveys.
- Meetings were held with leaders, including those who hold responsibility for specific subjects.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body and one other governor.
- The lead inspector held an interview with a school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection. They considered the school's own surveys of parents' views. There were 36 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including six comments. Inspectors took these responses and comments into consideration.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for members of staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included minutes of meetings of the governing body and external reviews of the school by the local authority. Inspectors looked at documents relating to the school's evaluation of its performance and discussed these with leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils' attainment and progress. They also examined safeguarding information, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and welfare.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector
Avtar Sherri	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Warner	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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