

Thomas Buxton Primary School

Buxton Street, Bethnal Green, London E1 5AR

Inspection dates

31 January, 2 and 3 February 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

- Through determination, ambition and commitment, the headteacher has maintained and built on the school's strengths since the last inspection. She has grown a highly competent and dedicated team of leaders whose collective high expectations are reflected in all aspects of the school.
- Leaders and governors have well-established systems and routines in place for monitoring and continually improving the effectiveness of the school's work.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers' accurate assessments and their positive relationships with pupils mean that they know each child very well and what each needs in order to be successful. Teachers provide pupils with the right level of support and challenge to enable them to fulfil their potential. Pupils consistently make better than average progress.
- The early years provides a safe and stimulating setting where children have an excellent start to their education. Adults provide high-quality teaching and guidance so that children make rapid progress.
- Pupils thrive on studying a rich curriculum, developing their reading, writing and mathematics skills over a wide range of subjects.
- The school nurtures pupils' mutual respect and considerate behaviour from the earliest opportunity. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are rarely distracted from their learning.
- Pupils have myriad opportunities to broaden their experiences and social outlook by going on trips, taking on responsibilities and working with pupils from different schools. They grow in confidence and develop a mature sense of responsibility for each other's well-being.
- Staff ensure that the safeguarding of children is their utmost priority. The school is vigilant to risks to pupils' safety and takes action swiftly and relentlessly, so that pupils receive the support they need.
- The school forges strong and positive links with parents. Leaders have close communications with parents about their child's experiences at school and provide them with helpful guidance on how best to support their child's learning at home.
- Leaders comprehensively track the achievement of individual pupils so that they receive the help they need to make good progress. Occasionally, trends of achievement for groups of pupils are not picked up promptly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that thorough analysis of pupils' progress identifies any underachievement of groups of pupils as promptly as it does for individual pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has built on the strengths recognised at the last inspection. Leaders have continued the impressive advances and tirelessly maintained their commitment to improvement, as noted in the previous inspection report. As a result, the school provides an outstanding quality of education. Pupils thrive in this caring, safe and motivating environment. They make excellent progress in their studies, whatever their starting points. Pupils gain a broad and confident social awareness so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders have established highly effective systems and productive routines which benefit all aspects of school life. School leaders successfully nurture a collective responsibility, upheld by all staff, for maintaining high standards and high expectations of themselves and each other. Leaders are not complacent. They are vigilant in their review and evaluation of the school's effectiveness. This means that they act swiftly, knowing exactly what must be done if ever improvements are needed.
- Comprehensive programmes of staff induction, support and training ensure that the quality of teaching is never less than good and is often outstanding. Leaders have well-organised systems to identify and analyse teachers' strengths and areas for further development. Very effective training programmes are designed to enable teachers to refine their skills further. Leaders provide teachers with many opportunities to share good practice across the school. The large majority of staff who completed the inspection survey agree that they receive excellent training and development opportunities.
- Staff are positive role models for pupils in their professionalism, collaboration and willingness to work hard and learn new skills. This is represented in teachers' drive to improve their skills and highlighted in the 'Spanish Buzz Day' event that took place during the inspection. Teachers trained and developed their knowledge and understanding of the Spanish language and traditions, so that they could ably lead special sessions for pupils from Years 1 to 6, including Spanish conversation, dancing and cooking.
- Leaders work to ensure that pupils' outstanding personal development and welfare extends beyond their experience in school. Leaders provide exceptional guidance for parents to support their child's learning, health and well-being at home. Regular workshops provide parents with information about what their child is learning at school, as well as drop-in sessions to support parents' use of information and communication technology. Parents who spoke to inspectors and completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, were very positive about their experience of the school.
- Leaders are dedicated to providing pupils with educational and enriching opportunities. The curriculum is very well designed so that pupils gain essential knowledge and skills across a range of themes. It promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural education fully. Leaders make the most of all that London has to offer. Pupils gain a wealth of experience going on trips to a wide variety of locations. This includes visits to historical sites, galleries and museums, which they apply directly to their work in lessons. Leaders place great priority on all pupils gaining from these experiences,

which might not otherwise be possible for them, and have thoughtfully compiled a minimum enrichment entitlement for all pupils during their time in school. This extensive list includes joining a library, working with a published poet, going on a boat and ordering and eating a meal in a restaurant. These valuable and memorable excursions broaden pupils' social outlook and help to build their confidence and readiness for their future adult lives.

- The Rights Respecting agenda, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, pervades all aspects of school life. Children learn from the earliest stages how to apply the rights – for example to be listened to and be healthy – to their lives in and out of school. Pupils rarely need to be reminded to be attentive to their work, or to improve their behaviour, because of the respect they show to each other and their teachers.
- Leaders invest the physical education and sports premium effectively so that more pupils gain experience of a wide range of sports and take part in more competitions. Pupils grow in confidence and develop their leadership skills through their work with professional sports coaches.
- Leaders allocate the pupil premium grant wisely, mindful of individual pupils' circumstances, so that disadvantaged pupils receive the support they need to achieve well and have a fulfilling experience of school life.
- All members of the leadership team work effectively together to regularly review pupils' progress. This means that leaders identify rapidly when pupils are not making the progress expected of them and the specific support they need is put in place rapidly. Phase leaders' detailed and thorough monitoring is exemplary, demonstrating their great concern that every pupil is helped to reach their full potential. The focus on individual pupils means that occasionally leaders do not pick up on any pattern of underachievement in groups as quickly as they should. However, the effectiveness of interventions and outstanding teaching means that groups of pupils who need to catch up make accelerated progress, rapidly catching up with their peers.
- Subject leaders have gained valuable leadership development through relevant training, supported well by the local authority, and by working closely with senior leaders. New leaders rapidly become well placed to hold teachers to account for the quality of the teaching in the subject for which they are responsible. Senior leaders are now developing a coaching model to extend their leadership training to all teachers to ensure that strong leadership at all levels continues to be sustained.

Governance of the school

- Governors ensure that they are well informed about all aspects of the school's work through receiving comprehensive reports from the headteacher and making regular visits to the school. They attend appropriate training so that they are well placed to understand and question the information leaders give to them.
- Governors share the same high expectations as other school leaders for the effectiveness of the school, holding leaders to account when improvements are needed in order to maintain high standards.

- When recruiting new members, governors make sure that successful applicants have the right range of skills, experience and knowledge to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has very well-organised and thorough systems to maintain the safety of pupils. Staff are perceptive to signs that might raise safeguarding concerns about a pupil and are clear on what they need to do, because of their up-to-date training. Leaders follow up concerns with care, maintaining detailed records, and are rightly persistent when liaising with outside agencies so that pupils receive the support they need.
- Pupils report that they feel really safe in school and that the school helps them learn how to stay safe both in and out of school. Parents are very positive about how the school provides such a safe and stable environment for their child.
- The single central record of pre-employment checks indicates that leaders carry out all the required recruitment checks of staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Lessons across the school are characterised by diligent, attentive pupils who are motivated to do well because of their teachers' high expectations and commitment. Teachers provide clear explanations and demonstrate the learning they expect of pupils so pupils are able to embark on tasks promptly and successfully.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that pupils receive the right levels of support and challenge, basing their planning on accurate checks on pupils' work. This means that no time is wasted and pupils are rarely distracted from their work. Teachers respond effectively to occasions when pupils are ready to move on to more complex tasks or need more guidance than anticipated.
- Teachers draw on their strong subject knowledge effectively to ensure that pupils' understanding of a topic is accurate. Staff know their pupils very well and so can target the use of a range of well-planned resources appropriately to support individuals as needed. Examples include providing a clock when a group of lower-ability pupils needed more help working out time problems, and referencing classroom displays to prompt pupils' use of a wider vocabulary.
- Teachers seize every opportunity across the curriculum to develop pupils' reading, writing and number skills. Teachers question pupils thoughtfully to enable them to refine their oral and written responses, and their use of technical terminology. This boosts the quality of pupils' writing and their problem solving and reasoning in mathematics. Teachers nurture pupils' mature attitude to their learning and promote essential study skills, for example by ensuring that pupils read questions carefully to make sure they understand what they need to do.

- The positive relationships between pupils and teachers nurtured across the school enhance learning in lessons. Pupils are comfortable sharing their ideas and work together well when persevering with more difficult tasks. Teachers and teaching assistants judge accurately the right point to provide additional guidance and when pupils are able to work out a problem for themselves and with each other.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are well placed to recognise risk and determine right from wrong because of their upholding of the Rights Respecting agenda across the school. Pupils demonstrate a mature empathy for those less fortunate than themselves, with a heightened awareness of social issues, injustice and unfairness. Pupils want to actively make a difference. This attitude is applied to pupils' work in their lessons. In a piece of extended writing in which pupils had to rewrite Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech, pupils demonstrated their excellent awareness of issues such as homelessness and poverty, and respect for the environment and living things.
- Pupils are strikingly considerate of each other's health and well-being, being appreciative of the opportunities they have in school. The school council organises the distribution of healthy snacks at breaktime. Pupils represent the school in the E1 pupil parliament with other schools in the area and have discussions with professionals such as lawyers and politicians. Their resultant work on projects, for example to reduce food waste, heightens their sense of social responsibility.
- Pupils learn more about those from faiths, cultures and backgrounds other than their own through assemblies, curriculum studies and trips. Pupils make links with others who attend contrasting schools, for example in rural areas. Pupils complete projects together, gaining an insight into each other's lives.
- Pupils relish a wide range of opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. Through the school's 'job centre', pupils take on key roles each term such as helping in the library, hearing younger pupils read or helping in the garden. The process of applying and being selected for a role boosts their knowledge of the world of work. They value receiving pay slips, which they exchange for toys every term. Pupils recognise how this experience helps them, as one pupil put it, 'prepare for their future'. Teachers encourage pupils to apply for different roles according to their skills and interests, so no one misses out.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils and their parents appreciate the importance of regular attendance and being punctual to school. Leaders' regular reminders about attendance, including holding boards showing daily attendance figures outside the school, motivate staff, parents and pupils to maintain high standards. Overall attendance to school is consistently above the national figures. When individuals or groups are absent, the school's highly efficient

specialist attendance team follow up and give support to parents, so that attendance rapidly improves. Pupils respond enthusiastically to class awards for 100% attendance.

- Pupils are friendly and polite. They socialise happily at breaktimes. They are keen to share their views and listen respectfully to others.
- The school's regular focus on anti-bullying means that pupils have an excellent understanding that bullying can take different forms and that it is wrong. Serious incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils value the availability of the 'wonders, what if, worry' box, in which pupils place a note of anything that is worrying them, and are confident that adults in the school resolve any upsets. Pupils have a strong sense of looking out for each other. This is formalised in Year 6 when every pupil is trained as a peer mentor so they can give support to anyone who needs a friend in the playground.
- Pupils take great delight in celebrating each other's successes in regular assemblies. The assembly attended by inspectors was a stunning combination of tangible excitement and enjoyment with impeccable behaviour and attentiveness. The weekly routine is clearly well established as Year 6 pupils lead the assembly and give out certificates and award the attendance cups. Younger year groups respond respectfully to the older pupils, who set a fine example of measured confidence and adept presentation skills in a highly motivating and impressive event.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Over time, pupils consistently make rapid progress. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly better than average. Disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well as other pupils nationally and often better, supported well by the pupil premium.
- The school's assessment information is thoroughly checked, both within the school and with external partners. This information indicates that since the end of the last academic year, all pupils and all groups of pupils have been making rapid progress across all year groups. The school's predictions for pupils' outcomes in 2017 indicate that previous high standards will be exceeded.
- The achievement of pupils in key stage 1 has steadily improved in recent years. When some pupils underachieved in the assessments in 2016, leaders took swift action to support them so that they rapidly caught up with their peers within one term.
- Pupils' work in their books and the schools' assessment information show that they make sustained and substantial progress across a wide range of subjects. This is because leaders have consistently high expectations for pupils' achievement across all subjects. Leaders ensure that teachers develop their skills and knowledge rapidly if there are any areas of the curriculum in which they feel less confident.
- Most-able pupils make rapid progress because they thrive on routine challenge from their teachers. They benefit from enrichment opportunities such as regular 'scholars' trips to local secondary schools, attending workshops in English and topics such as 'civilisation'.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally achieve as well as their peers because of the well-planned and targeted support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with more complex needs make good progress

in meeting their individual targets.

- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 is consistently above the national average.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about the books they choose to read. Their reading logs show they read often at home and at school. They develop their skills through opportunities across all subjects to read out loud and to boost their knowledge using a variety of texts. As a result, generally pupils read at standards higher than average for their age.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leaders in the early years reflect the high standards and expectations seen across the whole school. The early years presents a safe and highly stimulating environment, both indoors and outside, in which children flourish.
- Children make substantial and sustained progress from their low starting points because of the high quality of teaching and guidance they receive from adults in the early years. By the end of the early years the proportion achieving a good standard of development exceeds the national average. Disadvantaged children achieve at least as well as other children nationally.
- Adults' assessment of children's progress is accurate, regular and thorough. This means that they know precisely what each child needs in order to make rapid progress.
- Children are provided with targeted support so they do not fall behind others. Adults use questioning skilfully to extend children's vocabulary and deepen their thinking. The most able children are motivated to approach challenges with enthusiasm, which helps them to achieve standards that exceed expectations for children of their age.
- Adults encourage all children to persevere and nurture their resilience so that children appreciate the fulfilment of succeeding in a task that they have found difficult. This helps them to be well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education in key stage 1.
- Children are rarely distracted from a wide range of challenging activities, which, with careful guidance from adults, enable children to develop their skills and knowledge. There are extensive opportunities for children to practise their reading, writing and use of numbers. Adults plan learning opportunities based on imaginative themes. Children excitedly followed a treasure map as part of the pirates theme, boosting their physical development and language skills.
- Leaders work closely with outside agencies to help identify children's specific learning needs. Specialist staff promote children's speech and language development.
- Children learn swiftly to respect each other and socialise very positively, cooperating happily on tasks, sharing resources and playing together. They respond promptly to the adults' high expectations. Adults apply the Rights Respecting agenda appropriately to develop, for example, children's understanding of health, safety and hygiene.
- Leaders establish positive relationships with parents and communicate with them helpfully before children start and through their time in the early years. Adults provide parents with useful information about their children's routines in the early years and

what they will learn, as well as valuable support and reassurance as needed to enable children to have a smooth start to their school life.

School details

Unique reference number	100930
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10023633

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	442
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sajjad Miah
Headteacher	Lorraine Flanagan
Telephone number	020 7247 3816
Website	www.thomasbuxton.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Email address	head@thomasbuxton.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 June 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. A higher proportion of pupils than average have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils who represent minority ethnic groups is much higher than average. The majority of pupils are of Asian or Asian British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress of pupils by the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority. They also met with groups of pupils from all year groups.
- Inspectors observed parts of seven lessons and made shorter visits to lessons, sometimes accompanied by senior leaders. On the second day of the inspection, key stages 1 and 2 pupils were involved in a special curricular event called 'Spanish Buzz Day' which inspectors visited throughout the day.
- Two inspectors attended assemblies. One inspector listened to pupils read, out of class.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and around the school.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils through conversations as well as surveys completed for the inspection and surveys collected by the school.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of school documentation including the school's achievement information, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, attendance records and documents relating to the safeguarding of children.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Radomsky	Ofsted Inspector
Raj Mehta	Ofsted Inspector
Jeanie Jovanova	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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