

ARK Priory Primary Academy

Acton Lane, London, W3 8NR

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Early years provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. They set high standards for themselves and others. As a result they have achieved a great deal since the school opened in September 2013.
- Children leave Reception with skills which are well above those typically found and having made outstanding progress across the early years.
- By the end of Year 1, the phonic (letters and the sounds they represent) skills of pupils are exceptional. Half of these pupils have a reading age which is two years above their chronological age.
- Pupils' attainment is extremely high. Half of the pupils in Year 1 are working at a level in reading, writing and mathematics which is a year ahead of that expected of them now.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers, additional adults and pupils work extremely well together to ensure that pupils reach high standards and their skills develop exceptionally well.
- Good quality teaching in lessons is complemented by additional finely matched work outside of lessons. However, the most able pupils and those with special educational needs are not all making rapid progress yet.
- Pupils feel very safe at the school and know how to keep safe. They play and work extremely well together.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They embody the values of the school in lessons to 'explore, endeavour, excel', and their motto to have 'courage to fly'.
- Governors are actively involved in school life. They know the school well and provide good support and challenge to school leaders to make even more improvements.
- The ARK School multi-academy Trust provides strong and highly effective support to the school. It ensures, for example, that assessment is accurate and that staff are well trained.
- Middle leaders are very well supported and developed, taking an active part in planning subjects and checks on learning. There is more work to be done to develop middle leaders even more as the school grows.
- Senior leaders carry out regular and highly effective checks on teaching. These have ensured that weaknesses have been addressed and achievement has strengthened.
- Provision in Nursery has improved, so that it is now good, and provision across the early years is now outstanding.
- In 2014, the vast majority of children achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception. This was well above average. In the current year they are attaining at even higher levels.
- Pupils have impressive opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. These, alongside assemblies, lessons and the school values, ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes. She looked at pupils' work in books in class, on display and as a separate activity. Five of these activities were conducted jointly with the headteacher and the phonics leader.
- The inspector met with senior, subject and early years leaders. She also held meetings with leaders responsible for special educational needs, English as an additional language and child protection.
- A phone call was also held with the Director of Primary Education for the ARK Schools multi-academy Trust.
- The inspector held formal and informal discussions with pupils. She listened to pupils reading and observed them at break, lunchtimes and in assembly time.
- The 82 responses to the online Parent View survey, as well as comments made to the inspector by parents during the inspection, were considered. Responses to the school's own staff survey from this academic year and responses from staff to an inspection questionnaire were analysed.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation. This included records of pupils' attainment and progress, information about checks on teaching and the management of staff performance, the school's development plans and self-evaluation summary. She also scrutinised external evaluations of school performance by the local authority and ARK Schools multi-academy Trust; the school's website; behaviour logs; case studies; and, safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Najoud Ensaff, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- ARK Priory Primary Academy opened in September 2013 as a new start school. It is part of the ARK Schools multi-academy Trust.
- There are currently children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1, but the school will eventually cater for pupils up to Year 6.
- Children attend Nursery either in the morning or the afternoon. They attend Reception classes on a full-time basis.
- The school runs an extended day, with lessons until 4.00pm.
- About half of the pupils are from White British heritages, with the other half coming from a range of other backgrounds. There is an above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, although only a small proportion is at early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) in the school is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs is also below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all of the most able pupils and all of those with special educational needs make the same rapid progress as others.
- As the school grows, develop the role of middle leaders.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is an outstanding role model for staff and pupils. She sets high standards and, along with other leaders, has high aspirations for pupils' behaviour and achievement.
- Much has been achieved in the short time the school has been open. Children in Reception last year made outstanding progress and left the early years with skills which were well above those typically found. They entered Year 1 very well prepared for learning and, this academic year, they continue to thrive.
- The trust provides highly effective support to the school. Through regular meetings and visits, it ensures that assessment is accurate and staff are well trained. It carries out regular evaluations of school performance and provides closely tailored support to ensure that any weaknesses are quickly addressed.
- Early identification of weaknesses in Nursery teaching last year ensured that this has been convincingly tackled, so that children now learn well in Nursery.
- Middle leaders are actively involved in checks on learning and in planning of subjects. Their skills are developed very well so that they have a very clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their areas. They show great commitment and drive in the pursuit of excellence. The role of middle leaders is not as developed as possible.
- Senior leaders carry out effective checks on learning through visits to classes, by looking at pupils' books and by analysing school data. Regular progress review meetings ensure that gaps in learning are addressed and pupils achieve exceptionally well.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous and leaders have a clear understanding about strengths and weaknesses. These lead to very well focused development plans. Leaders, including governors, regularly monitor progress made towards actions on these plans, so that the school is constantly seeking to improve.
- Leaders ensure that equal opportunities are promoted well. They look closely at the performance of different groups and ensure that where any relative differences appear these are eliminated quickly. For example, some differences between the achievement of disadvantaged children in Reception, in areas such as art last year, have been thoroughly tackled this year. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The school provides a broad, balanced and carefully planned range of subjects which enables pupils to learn exceptionally well. This is complemented extremely well by opportunities to learn outside the classroom, through visits for example to the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum and other places of interest.
- Alongside visits to places of interest, pupils have excellent opportunities to attend extra-curricular clubs which help them to develop academically, socially and creatively. In this way and through assemblies and the school values, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well.
- Pupils learn about democracy through school council elections and by learning about the General Election and the constitution of the United Kingdom. They understand what it means to be tolerant and learn about a range of religions, as well as about the importance of rules. They are thus being well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the primary sport funding effectively to provide coaching for pupils and staff, to extend provision and resources for sport. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' skills and on participation rates in sports activities.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to provide tailored support for disadvantaged pupils in relation to literacy and numeracy and also to help with pupils' social skills and access to enrichment activities. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do extremely well, outperforming others nationally in the Year 1 phonic check this year and in the proportion who achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2014.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. This ensures that pupils feel safe and are safe. All staff have undergone appropriate employment checks and have received high quality up-to-date training in child protection.
- Leaders engage extremely well with parents. They provide up-to-date and useful information for parents through the school website and through two academic reports, as well as through additional parent meetings. They take into account the views of parents through consultations with them and surveys. All parents who responded to Parent View indicated that their children were happy at the school and, overwhelmingly, parents recommended the school to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors actively involve themselves in the life of the school. They are very well informed about pupils' achievement and about the quality of teaching in the school. They ask searching questions of school

leaders about these areas.

- They ensure that there are robust systems in place to hold staff to account, so that teachers show the impact of their work on maintaining or raising standards before they receive increases in salary. In the very few cases where it has been appropriate in the past, weaknesses in performance have been tackled decisively.
- Governors make sure that arrangements for the safeguarding of children meet requirements. Governors with safeguarding responsibilities work with senior leaders to ensure that safety is given utmost importance in the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They focus very well on tasks and listen attentively. They move quickly and quietly between different parts of a lesson and are helped to do this by teachers who manage these transitions very well.
- Pupils respond to staff instructions very quickly, both inside lessons and out in the playground or in the hall. Often calls for quiet need no more than a raised arm by an adult.
- Pupils understand the 'traffic light' behaviour management system well. Age appropriate sanctions and rewards ensure that pupils confidently know the difference between right and wrong.
- The school's focus on family dining, where food is served from the middle of a table and pupils sit with staff at round tables, ensures that pupils learn to socialise and interact courteously with one another and with adults when eating.
- Pupils interact very well together at break times. They happily play together and are very well supported by adults to engage in safe play.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and there have been no pupil exclusions.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and they know how to keep safe, for example in the event of a fire, when crossing the road and when using a computer.
- Pupils report that they typically get along well together and any rare disagreements are sorted out quickly. Parents overwhelmingly agree that behaviour in the school is excellent and their children are well looked after.
- Pupils say that staff take care of them really well and parent responses from Parent View support this view.
- Observations on the inspection indicate that any minor accidents are quickly and effectively dealt with and records are maintained meticulously.
- The school site is kept secure and pupils are very well supervised during the day.
- Leaders work very well with external agencies to help to protect pupils from harm. They work effectively to overcome barriers to learning for particular pupils with behaviour needs.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers and pupils work extremely well together so that pupils' skills develop exceptionally well over time.
- Teachers make learning interesting and fun, showing secure subject knowledge and encouraging pupils to 'explore, endeavour and excel'.
- Pupils' work is very well celebrated in corridors and in classrooms. Lovely examples of models, for example, linked to work on expeditions, the Houses of Parliament and different habitats are seen in corridors, alongside Reception children's descriptions of *The Gruffalo*.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check on pupils' understanding and probe their learning. They provide excellent support in lessons through regular and timely feedback.
- The teaching of reading is outstanding. Children are taught phonics in groups of similar ability from Nursery. They are supported extremely well to learn new sounds and apply their skills when reading and

writing. The school's use of a range of measures and approaches ensures that pupils learn not only to sound out letters and words but also to understand what they are reading.

- The teaching of writing is highly effective. Pupils have excellent opportunities to write across subjects, to write for different purposes and to learn spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Mathematics is also taught well with pupils' basic number skills developed from a young age. Children in Reception are taught to count at least to 20. Some learn to add numbers which extend beyond 10 and to solve simple problems. In addition, Year 1 pupils have good opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in science lessons and in activities such as those related to planning for a party through a shopping trip to a local supermarket.
- Regular marking ensures that pupils' learning is checked and, alongside verbal feedback in lessons, written comments help pupils to move forward in their learning. Often spelling corrections are acted on and simple editing is undertaken by pupils. The challenge provided to the most able pupils in lessons is not always as high as possible.
- There is a clearly considered homework policy. This ensures that children in Reception and pupils in Year 1 receive appropriate homework which complements work undertaken in lessons, and which is regularly reviewed. Children have excellent opportunities to share their home learning with others in the early years and lovely examples of collaborative and creative art work which involved both pupils and parents are displayed in corridors.
- Pupils' cultural and social achievement is very well promoted in lessons and through enrichment opportunities involving music, sport and art. For example, during Art Week, pupils worked with a local art group to create a set of installations which represented the professions they wished to pursue as adults.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding because, from broadly typical starting points, pupils make exceptional progress. Children leave Reception with skills which are significantly higher than those typically found and continue to excel in Year 1.
- The percentage of children who achieved and exceeded a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2014 was much higher than in other schools nationally. School evidence shows that children are doing even better this year.
- Pupils' phonic skills are highly impressive. By the end of Year 1 nearly all on track to meet the expected standard in phonics .
- Half of the children in Year 1 are reading at a level two years ahead of their chronological age, and those heard reading by the inspector read with ease and fluency, sometimes tackling very challenging material such as full length chapter books.
- Pupils in Year 1 are able to write at length, organising their writing cohesively and with correct spelling and punctuation. Some are starting to use a range of punctuation and vocabulary. School council members in Year 1 proudly spoke about writing to the council about an uneven pavement, and children as young as five wrote at length recounting the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk*.
- Pupils are able to add two-digit numbers, sometimes using the column method, and they are able to apply their knowledge to problems involving money. As a result, pupils' levels of attainment in English and mathematics are almost a year ahead of that expected of them.
- School data show that pupils, regardless of their heritage or English language needs, make outstanding progress over time.
- Disadvantaged pupils make exceptional progress as a result of focused and carefully tailored support. In 2014, they left at the end of Reception with skills which were better than other children nationally in prime areas. This year, the skills of disadvantaged pupils in Reception and Year 1 have improved further.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make good, and sometimes better, progress from low starting points as a result of the support and specific resources provided for them. Not all are yet making the same rapid progress as others.
- The most able pupils make at least good progress from their starting points. Many have almost reached the level expected of pupils at the end of Year 2. Not all are yet making the same rapid progress as others.

The early years provision**is outstanding**

- Children learn extremely well in the early years. They have excellent opportunities to learn a range of skills through play activities and focused learning sessions, both indoors and outside.
- Teachers carefully model how to behave for children and they support them well in their learning through questioning and systematic checks on their learning.
- Children have excellent opportunities to make choices in their learning. Their knowledge of the world, physical development and art skills are well promoted through activities linked to current themes, such as outer space. Children have good opportunities to use a range of media to create colourful alien models. They explore how to transfer water from piping to a bowl, and learn to take risks and develop their balance and coordination when climbing frames.
- Work in learning journals, writing and mathematics books shows that children learn to spell and punctuate sentences well from a young age. By the time they leave Reception, some can write a page of writing which makes sense and which is punctuated into sentences.
- There is clear evidence of most children learning to add simple numbers to 10, even in Nursery, and to take away numbers between one and 20 by the time they leave Reception.
- Children are challenged well, so that those who develop more quickly are given problems to solve in mathematics and read more challenging books. Impressively, some children are able to write at length using correct spelling and sentences, for example recounting the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Excellent phonic skills are seen in children's spellings, with the most able spelling words such as 'naughty', 'shiny' and 'though' correctly.
- Parents are regularly involved in their children's learning and a member of staff visits every child's home when they first start in Nursery. The accuracy of assessments in the early years is ensured by involving parents and by liaising with the local authority and other schools within the ARK Schools multi-academy Trust.
- Staff have had opportunities to visit other effective settings which have helped to improve provision in Nursery.
- Leadership of early years is focused on the correct areas, including the teaching of phonics which is outstanding. Leaders ensure that children achieve extremely well by the time they leave Reception and that they are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Children in this section of the school feel safe and behave well. They listen attentively and respond quickly to instructions, demonstrating good levels of social interaction and confidence.
- They are helped to keep safe by adults, who are correctly vetted and who follow appropriate procedures in case of accidents.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139699
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	450064

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joshua Perry
Headteacher	Jacqueline Steele
Telephone number	0203 110 0717
Email address	info@arkprioryprimary.org

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