

Inspection of The James Cambell Primary School

Langley Crescent, Dagenham, Essex RM9 6TD

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has been through a period of change. Trust and school leaders have brought a fresh energy to the school. They want pupils to achieve well, and have raised teachers' expectations of pupils. The teaching of reading and mathematics has been improved quickly. However, in other subjects, lessons do not always hold pupils' attention. Pupils' learning in these areas is not well planned. Consequently, there are gaps in pupils' learning.

Under the direction of the executive headteacher, leaders have quickly set high expectations for behaviour. Everybody is clear about what the consequences are for poor behaviour. In most lessons, pupils concentrate and behave well. In a few lessons, pupils' behaviour is not as good.

Pupils say that they feel safe. Some can be a little boisterous at playtimes. Some parents and pupils believe that bullying was not always acted on in the past. They agree that this has changed since the arrival of the new leadership team. Leaders sort out concerns appropriately.

Pupils like the range of sporting activities available. They were enthusiastic about opportunities to find out about the world of work through a recent careers event. The school makes sure that pupils with talents in music are supported to develop them.

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

School and trust leaders are well aware of historic weaknesses in the quality of education provided by the school. They have acted promptly to improve teaching and assessment. The executive headteacher has swiftly identified what needs to improve. For example, she has acted quickly to draw out and make good use of subject leaders' expertise. They have provided subject training that has given staff greater confidence in teaching reading comprehension. Pupils' achievements in reading are beginning to improve.

Phonics results in Year 1 have not been strong in recent years. However, phonics teaching for current pupils is well planned. Training has given staff a better understanding of how to teach reading effectively. In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, phonics teaching is targeted to pupils' exact needs. Curriculum leaders have a good knowledge of quality children's literature. The impact of this was seen on pupils, who talked with enthusiasm about books they had read in class recently. As importantly, pupils are given the right reading books to move their reading on. The school has committed resources to improving further the quality of books in the school library.

In reading, skills are planned and taught to pupils in the correct order. In mathematics, the school has adopted a commercial scheme of work to ensure that

work is also sequenced logically. The order for teaching different mathematical concepts is set out clearly. This is supporting staff to develop their knowledge of the subject and better identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. For instance, leaders have identified that not all pupils in key stage 1 are as fluent as they should be in recalling number facts. Staff have made changes to teaching as a result. They have also created workshops to help parents better understand early mathematics and enable them to help their children at home.

The curriculum in reading and mathematics is better developed than in other curriculum areas. Leaders are at an early stage in planning improvements in other subjects, such as history, geography, science and design and technology. Teachers are not clear about what knowledge and skills pupils need to acquire in these subjects. They do not share a common understanding of the school's curriculum and what pupils need to learn in each subject. Consequently, they do not routinely explain ideas and information to pupils as well as they could. Pupils become confused and, sometimes, disengaged, and do not achieve well.

Pupils have good opportunities to learn about diverse communities and the different cultures and beliefs in their school. They understand that they need to treat people from all groups with respect. The school values that the executive headteacher introduced, have raised the importance of equality and respect. These values are well understood by pupils and staff. School leaders give pupils the opportunity to meet people with different jobs, such as nurses and scientists.

Behaviour as pupils enter the school, and as classes move around, is calm and orderly. Where teaching is clear and well planned, pupils concentrate well on their learning. In other lessons, some pupils become distracted. At playtimes, some adults are not quick enough to challenge inappropriate behaviour. Those pupils who find it difficult to behave well receive support to change and improve. However, leaders do not always evaluate how effective these strategies are on improving individual pupils' behaviour.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs correctly identified. Pupils with complex SEND are given good support. Other pupils with SEND do not always receive the help they need to achieve as well as they could across the curriculum.

The environment in the early years foundation stage provides rich resources for learning. The nursery and Reception classes offer well-planned and engaging activities for children. Staff are very aware of each child's needs and adapt their use of language skilfully to the needs of different groups. They make good use of questioning to help children think deeply. The teaching of reading in Reception classes is lively and effective. Children enjoy applying their reading to learning activities based on books they have read.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school carries out and accurately records the necessary checks on all staff employed in the school. Staff have a good understanding of the risks that pupils may face in the local community. They know what they should be concerned about and how to report their concerns. Leaders make sure that staff's safeguarding training is fully up to date. The school works well with other agencies to make sure that concerns are followed up. Pupils learn about risks that they may face and how to stay safe as part of the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In English and mathematics, curriculum plans have been sequenced to show clearly what pupils need to know. Teachers have received training, which has developed their ability to teach these subjects well. In other subjects, planning does not set out a clear sequence of learning. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their learning and do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders need to develop planning and provide training so that teachers' subject knowledge improves, and pupils achieve well across the curriculum.
- Leaders have raised expectations for good behaviour. However, not all staff are quick enough to intervene when pupils' behaviour is not appropriate, particularly at playtimes. While strategies are provided to support pupils with improving their behaviour, the success of these strategies is not always evaluated. Leaders need to make sure that all staff apply the same high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They also need to track and measure the success of behaviour interventions, so that they know what is effective and what is not.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	144280
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10128240
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	743
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sid Mubashar
Headteacher	Helen Williams (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.jamescambell.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The James Cambell Primary School is part of the Partnership Learning multi-academy trust. The executive headteacher has been in post since November 2019.
- The James Cambell Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2017. When its predecessor school, The James Cambell Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion manager, subject and phase leaders, representatives from Partnership Learning, staff, parents and pupils.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, history, science, mathematics, geography, and design and technology. We visited lessons, talked to curriculum leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff. We talked to pupils about their learning and looked at their workbooks. We talked to the inclusion manager.

- We met with the designated safeguarding lead and looked at safeguarding records and policies. We talked to staff about safeguarding training they had received. We talked to pupils about what they had learned about keeping safe.
- We considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, including on behaviour and bullying. We also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes.

Inspection team

Bryony Freeman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Daniel-John Constable	Her Majesty's Inspector
Meena Walia	Ofsted Inspector
Ellie Whilby	Ofsted Inspector

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