

Angel Oak Academy

Burcher Gale Grove. Peckham, London SE15 6FL

Inspection dates

11–12 October 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The progress of pupils and their attainment are rising at an impressively rapid and sustained rate. Pupils build very strong foundations for success in secondary school.
- Inspirational leadership continually searches for ways to improve outcomes for the pupils. Leaders ensure that sustaining high-quality teaching is kept firmly under the spotlight.
- Leaders at all levels base actions to improve learning and outcomes for all pupils on an evaluation of their needs, current research evidence and an evaluation of their impact.
- Staff are committed to putting children at the heart of all that they do. Strong team spirit and a focus on learning are palpable.
- The governing body is led thoughtfully. It has been pivotal in planning for the school's development aligned with the strong moral purpose of the trust.
- The curriculum is innovative and tailored closely to pupils' needs. The learning of reading and writing is based firmly on studying high-quality texts. These texts are also used to teach geography and history.
- Pupils develop very secure number skills and a deep understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Behaviour has improved considerably. Pupils try hard to meet the school's constantly emphasised values of 'Achievement through hard work; strength through kindness'.
- Highly effective leadership has been instrumental in driving improvements in the early years.
- The school makes very effective use of resources such as the pupil premium, sport premium and funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school teaches pupils a strong system of values based in part on those of a 'Rights Respecting School'.
- Teachers have a clear understanding of language, which they apply when teaching phonics. Consequently, progress in phonics is rapid, starting from the early years.
- The school supports pupils in understanding how to keep safe. This helps to make them feel secure and cared for by staff.
- Rewards and firm action by school staff have led to rising and above-average attendance. Relatively few pupils are absent regularly.
- The school has strengthened its parental partnership, but has identified that there is more to do to engage parents fully in their children's learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance further the partnership with parents so that they can become engaged more fully in their children's learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Strong leadership is the main reason for the school's rapid improvement. Actions taken are based firmly on an analysis of the pupils' needs and are informed regularly by the latest research. The very strong tier of subject and year group leaders plays a powerful role in supporting school actions and the drive for improvement.
- Leaders set all staff challenging targets to raise outcomes for the pupils. Opportunities for professional development take place continually. These include regular staff training meetings and teachers working in groups to improve aspects of their practice.
- The expectation is that everyone is a learner. Several teachers are undertaking, or have completed, further qualifications. They bring current research evidence of the most effective practice back into the school, and this has a direct impact on developments.
- Leaders keep the curriculum constantly under review to ensure that previous gaps in pupils' knowledge are eliminated. The aim is to deepen the pupils' understanding and extend the richness of their experiences. Much of this comes through studying high-quality texts and using key indicators of learning to support planning across subjects.
- One key aim of the curriculum is to extend and deepen the pupils' 'cultural capital'. This is reflected in specialist teaching and ensuring a balance between teaching basic skills and ensuring depth of study in other subjects. It is also evident in the wide range of extra-curricular experiences available, and the linking of visits and visitors to the curriculum.
- The strong emphasis on performance in dance, drama and music builds on the pupils' talents and gives them a sense of pride. A visit to the Globe Theatre by Year 5 pupils led to a spontaneous performance of the Macbeth soliloquy, 'Is this a dagger which I see before me... ?' This was received with much applause from other visitors.
- Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that pupils develop a strong code of values. This is reflected in the emphasis on promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The values of a 'Rights Respecting School' effectively support these aspects.
- The school has achieved the national gold mark recognition for its commitment to sport, in part through the very effective use of the sport premium. Sports coaches provide expert teaching, run clubs and train teachers. Pupils participate in a wide range of sports including in competitive mixed-gender teams.
- The major part of the pupil premium funding is used to improve learning for all pupils through placing additional teachers in each year group. This is leading to increased progress and rising attainment for disadvantaged pupils.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities enables teachers to focus sharply on those with most need. The guidance from outside agencies and careful monitoring of the impact of actions support their rapid progress.
- Parents are involved increasingly in the life of the school. They speak with much enthusiasm about school staff and how they have brought about huge changes for

their children. While they are also becoming more involved in their children's learning, leaders have identified that this is a resource that could be developed further.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a pivotal strategic role. They check on performance and are analytical in the questions they pose to challenge the school's leaders. There is a high degree of expertise among governors and the trust, and a strong understanding of the school's qualities, improvements and what is needed next. Finances are deployed carefully and their impact evaluated.
- Governors make sure that the school fulfils the aims of the trust to improve the life chances of all pupils. The trust feels morally bound to help and support vulnerable schools, which this school was in the past. Governors and the trust board now see the school as having developed considerable expertise to share with others in the trust. They recognise how leaders have driven improvements based on good practice and the needs of the community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School staff have a deep understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and issues. Regular training enables different scenarios to be discussed to check their understanding. This heightens awareness and keeps them vigilant of issues facing pupils, such as possible radicalisation or female genital mutilation.
- Leaders have a strong understanding of the circumstances of the community, the challenges facing families and the risks pupils might face. This includes pupils witnessing the impact of local gangs. Leaders work effectively to get to the root causes of what might be influencing a pupil's behaviour or demeanour. Through this process, the school puts effective individual support in place, often with external guidance.
- The school teaches pupils to spot dangers and how to stay safe. This includes making sure that they understand dangers online such as potential grooming. They are also taught how to stay safe in the community.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The principle of 'no child left behind' underpins all teaching. This means that whole classes are taught the same material by expert teachers. They continually check understanding and skilfully intersperse lessons with opportunities for deeper learning.
- Training has led to teachers developing strong subject knowledge. This is reflected in confident, engaging and dynamic teaching across subjects. There is great consistency of approach across the school, while allowing the personality of individual teachers to shine through.
- High expectations of the pupils' learning are consistent throughout the school, including among specialist teachers. Teachers react quickly if pupils have misconceptions and tackle them immediately. Pupils are often given time to think so

that they can try to self-correct.

- Teachers phrase questions skilfully so that they can explore the pupils' understanding. Pupils know they are expected to explain their reasoning, justify their opinions and answer in full sentences.
- All pupils understand the high expectations of their behaviour. Teachers are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are fully focused and concentrating. This means that learning proceeds unhindered by disturbances and pupils can get the most out of the expert teaching.
- Studying high-quality texts deepens the pupils' wider reading skills such as inference and deduction. These texts also help them to understand sentence structure and how to apply this to their writing.
- Texts used also promote deep knowledge and understanding of history and geography. For example, Year 6 pupils studying 'The boy in the striped pyjamas' consider key aspects of the history of the Second World War. This is then linked to the geographical features of where the book is set.
- Teaching enables pupils to master and gain a deep understanding of new skills and concepts in mathematics. Teachers continually ensure that pupils have the opportunity to reinforce and consolidate their learning throughout each session. All pupils have the opportunity to explore concepts at greater depth and so deepen their understanding.
- Conversations and conferences with their teachers give pupils immediate feedback on how well they are doing and where they can improve. This makes a considerable difference to their learning and progress. This also enables teachers to identify swiftly where they might need to adjust their teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school strives to increase the pupils' confidence in many ways. Pupils are expected to shake an adult's hand while looking them in the eye. The school aims that by the end of Year 6 every pupil will perform in some way in front of an outside audience.
- Pupils are highly motivated and aware that success is due to their efforts. They show great resilience and a 'can do' attitude when faced with work that challenges them. Pupils are excited about the work they do around the texts they study, including the links to learning in history and geography.
- Pupils understand democracy and have a voice in developments through their roles as representatives on various bodies. This includes as 'Rights Respecting ambassadors' and house captains. Undertaking these roles teaches them leadership skills and how to take responsibility.
- Pupils show great respect for others and value differences in backgrounds. Reflecting this, key stage 2 pupils wrote and performed a song based on the UNICEF 'Rights of the child'. Those participating took huge enjoyment and pride in their performance.

- Pupils say that teachers care for their well-being and will help if they have any problems. They know what constitutes bullying and what to do. They say that bullying had been a problem in the past but not now. This is confirmed by parents and school records.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils say they have seen the school improve because of the focus on behaviour. Newcomers quickly settle in to the school's values and expectations. Behaviour outside lessons is calm and very orderly, which was not always the case previously.
- Pupils fully understand the high expectations for their behaviour. They know that this helps them to learn and do their best. Pupils respond instantly to their teachers. They say, 'Teachers are strict because they want the best for us.' This view is very much shared by parents.
- The pupils' conduct is often impeccable. Pupils are very polite and respectful. 'Head academicians' and sports councillors help mediate any differences in the playground and support behaviour expectations.
- The school has put in place very strong and effective systems for checking attendance. This includes establishing the whereabouts of vulnerable pupils who might have gone missing by making swift contact with home to find out reasons for absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Most Year 6 pupils reached at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017. An increasing number of the most able pupils exceeded this, particularly in mathematics. This represented outstanding progress for pupils whatever their ethnicity or whether they spoke English as an additional language.
- Foundations are laid by the end of Year 2 to enable learning to accelerate at key stage 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a very secure base with most reaching expected standards from a low baseline on entry.
- Pupils develop a deep understanding of literacy and numeracy. They apply their number skills fluently in a range of contexts. They learn to apply their understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling so that their writing is accurate. Pupils use their knowledge of science as a foundation for developing enquiry skills.
- Attainment in phonics is above average and rising. Pupils also make fast progress in developing wider reading skills. Many can interrogate texts and so gain deep meaning from what they are reading.
- Learning is sound and progress is strong in other subjects including from specialist teaching in music, art and physical education. For example, Year 3 pupils have refined art techniques used to draw impressively detailed sketches of 'Grendel's eye' stimulated by reading 'Beowulf'.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress similar to that of others in their classes. Their attainment is above that of other pupils nationally by the end of Year 6. All pupils

receive what they need on an individual basis.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make as secure progress as others in the school. This is based on a systematic approach to identifying and supporting their learning needs. The principle that class teachers take responsibility for their learning means that additional action is only required for those with the greatest needs.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Key leadership actions have been a major factor in improving provision and outcomes. For example, reorganising the Nursery to mornings only means that staff can work in Reception in the afternoon. This means greater adult contact for children.
- Adults are skilled at identifying what the children need. They identify differences forensically in their learning, and ways to diminish them, particularly in language, communication and their knowledge of the world.
- Teaching is highly effective. Adults rarely miss the opportunity to promote learning. Their interventions and questioning are skilled. They focus continually on developing the children's communication skills. This includes making sure that children learn the structure of language by hearing adults speak in full sentences.
- Quality texts such as 'Owl babies' develop the children's literacy very effectively and generate a love of books. They also gain knowledge and understanding of the world through handling related resources. Similarly, children looking at 'Oliver's vegetables' could handle and describe carrots and beetroots.
- Children make rapid progress in all areas of learning and particularly in their language and communication skills. Immersing Nursery children in language is particularly successful for those with weak skills. Most children reach the standard expected by the end of Reception and so are ready for key stage 1.
- Adults have secured a safe and very caring environment with children treated in a sensitive and appropriate way. Adults respond positively to children. In turn, they react positively towards adults and with each other.
- Much focus is placed on ensuring that children develop the skills to help them to learn. They collaborate constructively with each other and take responsibility for selecting resources. They are very interested in and curious about what they are learning.

School details

Unique reference number	141666
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10041048

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	402
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mark Deacon
Executive headteacher	Tim Mills
Head of school	Catherine Hewitt
Telephone number	020 7703 3125
Website	www.angeloakacademy.org
Email address	office@angeloakacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is well above average in size.
- Almost all pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is well above average. Many pupils enter the school at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The large majority of pupils are supported by additional government funding. This figure is well above average.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Nursery part time and the two Reception classes full time.
- The school provides childcare before and after school.

- The predecessor school became an academy within the STEP (Striving together for excellence in partnership) Trust in February 2015. The governing body was reconstituted at this time.
- The executive headteacher and head of school were appointed from September 2014. The considerable staffing instability at the time has fallen very considerably.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in parts of 45 lessons. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors to the majority of these. They looked at work in pupils' books and listened to key stage 1 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, the chair of the governing body, three members of the trust and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses this year to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and written contributions from the same 17 parents. Inspectors also talked with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including planning and monitoring documentation, records related to behaviour and attendance, and documents related to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also took into consideration the 37 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Parr	Ofsted Inspector
Rick Barnes	Ofsted Inspector

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