

# Inspection of Culloden Primary – A Paradigm Academy

Dee Street, Poplar, London E14 0PT

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Inspection dates:	10 and 11 June 2025
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Tahreena Ward. This school is part of Paradigm Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Bill Holledge, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Willis.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since July 2015. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Culloden Primary School is a calm and joyous place to learn. Pupils very much enjoy attending this friendly school. They settle quickly in the early years and develop caring relationships with staff. This nurturing ethos continues through to Year 6. Pupils feel safe and trust the staff around them to help whenever they have any worries.

The school has a strong inclusive culture that supports pupils exceptionally well, including those who are disadvantaged. It creates an environment where pupils feel valued members of the school community and are empowered to achieve their full potential, both academically and in their wider development.

The school has very high expectations for all pupils' achievement. They get a superb education, learn much and grow in many ways. Whatever their backgrounds, starting points or needs, all are supported to do their best and succeed. From the early years up, pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils also benefit from an exciting array of opportunities beyond the classroom, including thought-provoking experiences that broaden their horizons.

Many pupils speak different languages, and some arrive at different times during the year. Staff help them to settle in quickly and feel at home in the school community. Deaf pupils and those with other special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive expert support. They access the curriculum confidently and do very well in their learning.

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

The school has constructed a highly ambitious and inspiring curriculum for its pupils. It matches the ambition of the national curriculum and is crafted to meet pupils' needs and generate excitement for acquiring new knowledge. Across subjects, expectations of pupils' learning are clearly thought out, including, for example, the development of subject-specific vocabulary.

Starting in the early years, the curriculum is logically ordered so that pupils build their knowledge exceptionally well over time. This means that pupils are well placed to tackle more-complex ideas as they move through the school. For example, in mathematics, older pupils solve multi-step problems confidently because they have already secured their understanding of number and place value. Excellent explanations by teachers and modelling give pupils the tools that they need to be confident in building and applying knowledge in a subject.

In the early years too, the curriculum is delivered with skill, supported by well-chosen resources and interactions between staff and children. For example, in the outdoor area, staff know how to support children to take risks safely and sensibly and develop their physical skills.

Staff provide strong support for pupils with SEND. Leaders identify pupils' needs accurately and respond swiftly. In classrooms, staff skilfully adapt activities to meet

individual needs. As a result of this, pupils are helped to overcome any barriers and learn with confidence alongside their peers. This includes pupils who attend the deaf support base. These pupils benefit from a well-judged combination of targeted interventions, learning in mainstream classes as well as the use of British Sign Language to support their access to the curriculum.

The school has a long-established commitment to teaching phonics using a structured scheme, with effective extra support for those who need it. Children learn phonics from the start of Reception. They are quickly and accurately able to use their phonics knowledge to sound out and blend words. Books sent home match the sounds taught in class, and this supports pupils' reading practice. Staff receive high-quality training and deliver the programme exceptionally well. Children in early years show lots of enthusiasm for reading, enjoying rhymes and storytelling.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Staff are very clear on how they expect pupils to behave. Adults model politeness and kindness. They teach pupils important social skills so that pupils have the tools to reflect on and manage their emotions. Pupils also learn how others may be different from themselves. Pupils say that 'everyone is included here'. They show an appreciation for diversity and demonstrate high levels of respect for others.

The school has successfully improved rates of attendance in recent years. Most pupils attend school regularly. Where this is not the case, the school is persistent in seeking out and addressing any underlying causes for absence, including working with external agencies where necessary.

The school offers a stimulating and diverse range of enrichment opportunities as part of its 'hinterland curriculum'. These experiences contribute very positively to pupils' personal, social, and spiritual development. For instance, pupils explore etiquette and manners through social dining experiences. Leadership roles such as well-being ambassadors, pupil managers and the school council enable pupils to take on meaningful responsibilities.

The school is very well led and managed. High standards are the norm. The leadership's commitment to doing 'what can make the biggest difference to pupils' is realised in the school's aspirational academic curriculum and rich personal development offer. Through its strong oversight, the trust helps and challenges the school to achieve and sustain excellence.

Staff are happy and proud to work here. They appreciate the school's support for their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140064
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	10379153
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	633
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Willis
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Bill Holledge
<b>Principal</b>	Tahreena Ward
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cullodenacademy.paradigmtrust.org">www.cullodenacademy.paradigmtrust.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	30 June and 1 July 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is part of Paradigm Multi-academy Trust. It is made up of seven schools, including this school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision for pupils.
- The school has a deaf support base, which provides up to 30 places for pupils from Nursery through to Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders. They also met with members of the trust, including the chair of trustees and the CEO.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, geography, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted’s online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Lisa Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Ian Scotchbrook	Ofsted Inspector
Jeff Cole	Ofsted Inspector
Hayley McClenaghan	Ofsted Inspector
Jenny Lewis	Ofsted Inspector

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