



Well Culture. LeadWell. MoveWell. LiveWell.

## Kensington Primary School

### A Place Everyone Loves To Be

Kensington Primary School serves 655 pupils aged 4-11 in Newham, East London, one of the most culturally diverse areas in the country, with 83% of pupils speaking English as an additional language and representing over 40 home languages. Despite operating in a context of high socioeconomic disadvantage, Kensington maintains strong attendance (95.06%) and achieves wellbeing outcomes (SWEMWBS 23.84) above national averages for primary schools.

The school's average physical activity levels (3.60 on PAQ.C scale) and happiness scores (7.33/10) reflect a population that is active, engaged and thriving. Kensington's approach centres on creating belonging in diversity, ensuring every child, regardless of language background or cultural heritage, feels they are in a place they love.

Kensington Primary is a school where movement, relationships and emotional safety are deliberately woven into every part of the day so that children feel calm and confident. An approach that underpins Kensington's identity as "a place everyone loves to be".



We want our children to be safe, happy, healthy and loved. And that's it. Now, of course, we're here to educate. Of course, that's what we're held to account for. But we have an understanding that if we don't have that platform, then we're not going to be able to achieve those educational outcomes. **EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER**

### Movement Initiatives at Kensington Primary School

Movement is a core pillar of Kensington's wellbeing culture, woven deliberately through the school day to support regulation, joy, social connection and readiness to learn. In a community where many children have limited access to outdoor space, the school treats movement as essential infrastructure for physical and emotional health. Pupils repeatedly describe feeling "energised," "refreshed," and "ready to learn" after being active, and staff view movement as a mechanism that boosts focus, confidence and mood.

Kensington's movement offer is anchored in three key initiatives: **Workout Wednesday**, **OPAL playtimes** and a **research-informed PE and physical health curriculum**. Workout Wednesday is a whole-school ritual where pupils, staff and families begin the day with collective movement in the playground. Led by the PE Lead, it sets a positive tone for learning and strengthens social connection.

OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) transforms playtimes into rich, choice-driven movement experiences. Children run, climb, dig, scooter and invent games in an environment staff describe as "controlled chaos," where autonomy and joy drive high engagement. Pupils link OPAL directly to regulation and learning readiness. Alongside this, Kensington delivers structured fitness sessions three times a week and a skills-based PE curriculum that builds stamina, coordination and lifelong physical literacy.



## Movement for Regulation: Calm Corners and Purposeful Breaks

Kensington treats movement as a regulatory tool as much as a physical one, embedding opportunities for children to reset, breathe and regain emotional balance throughout the day. In a community where many pupils arrive carrying the sensory load of crowded housing, busy households and limited private space, these moments of movement and calm are essential for wellbeing. Pupils describe feeling “**more calm and relaxed**” after active play, and teachers observe that movement helps children return to learning with a steadier emotional baseline.

Calm Corners are a central feature. Every classroom includes a dedicated regulation space equipped with water, sensory items or soft furnishings, allowing pupils to step away briefly, move their bodies, lie down or simply breathe. These spaces are non-punitive and used with autonomy, signalling trust in children’s ability to self-regulate. One pupil explained, “**I ask my teacher if I can go to the calm corner and regulate myself,**” while another described going there to “**feel calm.**” Teachers note that these spaces prevent escalation and support pupils with higher sensory needs. Teachers also integrate short, purposeful breaks, moments of stretching, movement, breathing or active transitions, to reset attention and reduce cognitive overload. These breaks align with the school’s neuroscience-informed **Curriculum K**, which is a bespoke curriculum tailored for their children. It emphasises pacing, chunking and movement to support learning.

Together, Calm Corners and purposeful breaks create a rhythm to the school day that protects emotional safety, supports self-regulation and ensures pupils can re-enter learning feeling grounded, focused and in control.

## Outdoor Lessons and Learning

Outdoor learning is a deliberate and valued strand of Kensington’s wellbeing-led approach, offering pupils structured opportunities to move, explore and regulate in environments that feel spacious, sensory and freeing. Outdoor lessons provide an essential counterbalance to the urban catchment, a place to breathe, think and learn with their whole bodies. Staff describe how being outside “**gets them going**” and helps pupils return to class more settled and ready to engage, while children link outdoor activity to improved mood and focus.

Teachers make purposeful use of nearby parks, playgrounds and green spaces to integrate outdoor learning into Curriculum K, science, literacy, geography and wellbeing sessions. These lessons often involve movement-rich tasks such as exploring habitats, collecting natural materials, engaging in active storytelling. The emphasis is not simply on being outdoors, but on using the environment to deepen learning, strengthen relationships and support regulation. Pupils describe feeling calmer and happier after time outside, with one child explaining that being outdoors makes their “**brain a little more happy.**” Outdoor learning also strengthens social connection. Open spaces allow children to collaborate more freely, negotiate roles, solve problems and practise communication skills in ways that feel less pressured than the classroom. Teachers observe that pupils who may struggle with attention or emotional regulation indoors often thrive outside, showing increased confidence, curiosity and persistence.

By embedding outdoor lessons into the weekly rhythm of school life, Kensington ensures that movement, exploration and nature are core components of learning, providing experiences that support regulation, boost wellbeing and help children return to the classroom feeling grounded, energised and ready to learn.

