

St Mark's Primary School

Lower Boston Road, London, W7 2NR

Inspection dates

15–16 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teaching is good because of teachers' high expectations for all groups of pupils. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Attainment in English and mathematics is average and pupils make good progress across the school because the curriculum is well planned.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress well as a result of well planned support.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress from starting points which are often lower than those expected for their age.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say bullying is very rare and adults support them well. They feel safe and secure in this caring environment. Pupils manage their own behaviour well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- The senior leadership team has developed a clear vision for the school which is shared by all, and is well focused on the right priorities. This has led to better quality teaching.
- Governors know the school well. They provide effective support, understand how well the school is doing and know what needs improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes lessons do not provide enough challenge to ensure that all pupils make consistently rapid progress.
- The opportunities for outdoor learning for Nursery children are not of consistently high quality.
- Pupils are not always told exactly how to improve their work or given time to do this. Senior leaders do not check this aspect of teaching rigorously enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher and other senior staff.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, parents, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work, information about the achievement of pupils, safeguarding, attendance, development planning and the school's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors took into account the 44 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 18 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Emma Merva, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Teresa Davies	Additional Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- Pupils come from mainly White British and other European heritages. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Few are new to learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, for whom the school receives additional income, is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - regularly provide pupils with suitably challenging work
 - give more consistent and detailed advice about how pupils can improve their work and plan time for them to do this work.
- Further strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - regularly checking how effectively teachers assess and mark pupils' work in all classes
 - improving the outside space and opportunities for outdoor learning in the Nursery.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points. For example, in a Years 5/6 literacy lesson, pupils worked well together to form sentences that used punctuation, such as commas, correctly. As a result of effective questioning and guidance by the teacher they were able to produce increasingly complex sentences.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning. Parents and carers agree that their children make good progress at school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. This is because teachers are quick to identify pupils' needs and provide well-planned support. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils worked well independently with good resources to help them form words with '-ing' endings.
- Standards in reading by the end of Year 6 are average, with many pupils making more than expected progress. There is a systematic approach to teaching reading across the school and, as a result, pupils develop good skills and enjoy reading a variety of texts.
- Pupils from all cultural traditions make good progress, including those who speak English as an additional language. For example, pupils developed good listening skills in a small group of Years 3/4 pupils who were new to learning English. They actively and successfully listened for key words in a story. This typical response enabled them to progress as well as their peers, particularly in their fluency in English. Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium also make good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2 the average point scores for this group is increasing more rapidly than for all pupils nationally. This is because the funding is used well to provide targeted support where it is needed most, such as specific tuition for small groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good over time and some is outstanding. Parents and carers say their children receive good teaching at school which encourages their determination to achieve through positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers plan their lessons well, although, occasionally, activities are too easy for a few pupils to reach the higher levels. Pupils work well together and demonstrate purposeful relationships with adults. For example, in a Years 5/6 lesson, pupils were engaged and highly enthusiastic when planning their science investigation.
- The features of outstanding lessons are high expectations, outstanding relationships and pupils' excellent engagement in learning. For example, in a Years 3/4 music lesson, pupils were highly motivated through a warming-up activity which involved counting in their home languages, such as Polish and Arabic. Pupils made excellent progress as they learned to play different rhythms on the African drums.
- Teachers' marking is particularly good in English and mathematics. However, in other subjects it does not always show pupils clearly how to improve their work.
- Teaching of reading is good and there are good opportunities for pupils to practise their reading skills. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils worked well independently putting pictures and phrases into a timeline and discussing what order they came in. They could correctly identify the period in time when the events happened.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and activities are well organised. For example, during a lesson in the Reception class to teach children letters and sounds (phonics), children were working on tricky words, such as 'go', 'to' and 'no'. They showed enthusiasm and determination when saying and writing the words.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes behave very well. For example, in a Nursery lesson, children worked well together building plastic structures and displayed good levels of cooperation.
- Pupils feel safe and secure because of warm friendly relationships with adults and they know that there are people in school who they can talk to. Pupils have a good understanding of how to use computers safely and they say that bullying is very rare in school. Adults and pupils get on well together. Racist incidents are rare and pupils understand what racism means.
- Parents and carers also report that the school is very safe and that the school deals well with any incidents of bullying.
- Pupils who sometimes misbehave are well supported by the clear systems for managing their behaviour. Records show that no pupils have been excluded from school for poor behaviour.
- Attendance rates have gone up since the last inspection and are above average. The school has effective systems to encourage pupils to attend. For example, in the whole-school celebration assembly each week a cup is given to the class with the best attendance.
- Pupils from different backgrounds and cultures get on very well together, both in lessons and at play. They show respect for each other's cultures and this is evident when pupils work together.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear and ambitious plan to drive improvements further. The committed team of staff shares their vision. All have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The local authority provides light touch support because of the improvements made so far. This demonstrates that the school has the capacity to improve even more.
- The checking of teaching is regular and is done systematically by leaders at all levels. However, checks on marking are not regular or rigorous enough. Nevertheless, the leadership and management of teaching and learning are good. Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. There are clear records of this work. Support and training are given to those teachers who need extra guidance.
- The management of teachers' performance is good. There are regular and systematic reviews of teachers' work and its impact on pupils' achievement. This is closely linked to teachers' pay scales and pupils' progress towards their targets.
- The curriculum is interesting and provides a variety of carefully planned experiences. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs and activities, such as the trips to an activity centre, French lessons and opportunities for learning to play musical instruments.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is strong, especially cultural development. For example, in assembly, pupils celebrated success because children in the Early Years Foundation Stage had received a response from the Queen in relation to their Jubilee theme.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and provides an effective balance between activities led by adults and those initiated by children. The curriculum provides rich opportunities for children to learn about different cultures. However, what is not as well developed is the outside area in the Nursery section.
- Leaders work hard to ensure pupils of all abilities have equal opportunities to succeed. Regardless of their background, pupils are given support and access to all of the school's resources to ensure there is no discrimination of any kind.
- Safeguarding meets the current requirements and ensures all pupils are safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are determined in their approach to ensuring pupils receive a good education. They

work regularly with senior leaders and ask tough questions to ensure all pupils progress well. For example, governors know how well the school is doing in comparison with other schools. Through checking and meeting with the school, they have ensured that financial resources are well managed and that the pupil premium is spent on providing pupils with one-to-one support if it is needed. For example, some pupils are given extra individual sessions to improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Governors have a good understanding of teaching quality within the school through their weekly visits. They also know how decisions about promotion are linked to teachers' performance. All governors receive regular training in safeguarding and safer recruitment and they are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

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	101874
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	400507

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	344
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harvey Gallagher
Headteacher	Brian Mellish
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 May 2010
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