

Aveley Primary School

Stifford Road, Aveley, South Ockendon, RM15 4AA

Inspection dates

9–10 October 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although improving, the standard of pupils' work is below average.
- Pupils' progress varies from year to year and class to class. Some groups, such as the more-able pupils, and some whole classes are not making sufficient progress.
- Pupils do not make good progress in their writing.
- The teaching in some classes requires improvement.
- Teachers miss opportunities to question pupils in a way that results in an improvement in learning.
- Sometimes, pupils are given work that is too hard for them; at other times, the work is too easy.
- Lessons do not provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to learn independently.
- The governing body and the school's leaders are not rigorous enough in holding teachers to account for the progress which individual pupils or groups of pupils make in their classes.

The school has the following strengths

- Less-able pupils progress well.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive.
- When given the opportunity, pupils support each other to learn well.
- The teaching in some classes is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe at school.
- Boys, girls and pupils from different backgrounds play together well.
- Pupils understand what bullying is, and they feel it rarely happens in the school.
- The school has good relationships with parents.
- Leaders, managers and governors have brought about some improvements over the last year. They have eradicated inadequate teaching and have improved pupils' progress in mathematics and English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 33 lessons, taught by 14 teachers. Seven lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives from the governing body, a representative from the local authority, and staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including the school's documents on self-evaluation and safeguarding. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books and the tracking system used to monitor their progress.
- Inspectors considered the 32 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Miranda Perry, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Alan Jarvis	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Aveley is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has a learning development centre for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - using questioning in lessons which develops pupils' learning, particularly for the more-able
 - setting work at the right level for all pupils, particularly in writing
 - planning lesson activities that promote pupils' independent learning.
- Ensure that the governing body and the school's leaders have a greater impact on improving pupils' progress by:
 - setting teachers targets that focus on the progress of groups of pupils, particularly the more-able
 - regularly reviewing the extent to which teachers are meeting these targets
 - revising the targets accordingly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Although attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has been improving over a three-year period, it is not yet at the national average and still requires improvement in all subjects.
- Although it is improving, pupils' progress varies considerably and still requires improvement overall. Some groups of pupils and some classes make good progress, but others are not progressing as well as they should.
- Progress varies within year groups. For example, in one Key Stage 2 class, pupils had moved quickly from understanding the basic properties of a quadrilateral shape to defining different types of quadrilateral. In the parallel Key Stage 2 class, pupils did not progress from describing what a quadrilateral shape was.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter Reception with knowledge, skills and abilities that are well below those typically found. By the time they enter Year 1, they are much closer to the level expected for their age.
- Some more-able pupils make insufficient progress in all subjects. Their progress in writing is not good enough because they are not given activities which reinforce their learning and help them to reduce their mistakes.
- Pupils who have special educational needs who are supported through school action plus, and those who have a statement make good progress. The school works in close partnership with their parents to diagnose and resolve problems that might be hindering progress.
- Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well particularly because of the support they receive from the school's learning development centre, where their obstacles to progress are tackled. For example, after a combined Year 3 and 4 class had stopped for a snack break, where they were expected to take turns, share, sit calmly, and listen to each other's news, they returned to their mathematics lesson with renewed attention.
- Lower-ability pupils make good progress. This is because the school quickly and accurately identifies the levels at which they are working when they enter the school, and develops their learning through effective small-group work.
- Progress in mathematics and reading at Key Stage 2 has improved over the last year. Pupils have benefited from mental mathematics sessions, where they have practised their knowledge and recall of basic calculations. One boy explained that he was no longer put off complicated mathematics questions, saying 'I have quick thinking to back me up.'
- Pupils recognise they have made progress in reading. One pupil in Key Stage 1 explained that, because she reads a lot at school, she encourages her parents to read more with her at home.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of the teaching varies. In some classes, it is good. In others, it requires improvement.

- Where teaching requires improvement, pupils are not questioned in a way which challenges them to reflect on their own learning. Sometimes questions confuse pupils, or pupils are over-reliant on the teacher for the answers. Pupils feel that some of the questions that teachers ask them in their books are too vague to answer.
- Work is not always pitched at the right level for pupils. More-able pupils finish easy work and have to wait while their peers catch up. Sometimes, pupils feel they are given work that is repetitive. In a lesson focusing on the correct use of speech marks, a pupil in Key Stage 2 said that she was copying what she had done the day before.
- Sometimes, pupils are given an opportunity to take control of their learning. For example, in an art lesson, a pupil made good progress when she taught her peers about the effect of different pen techniques. However, typically, pupils do not get enough chances to practise new skills or explore new topics independently and spend too much time on the carpet listening to the teacher.
- When pupils are given the chance to work with partners and support each other's learning they do it well. For example, in an English lesson in Year 6, when pairs of pupils were asked to explain the meaning of a complicated phrase, one boy said to his hesitant partner, 'If you find it hard, I'll come in with some words to keep you going.'
- In good lessons, pupils respond well to high expectations and are impressed by their teacher's subject knowledge. In a science lesson in Year 5, for example, after the teacher had delighted pupils with his description of a crocodile clip, a girl said, 'I want to know everything that he knows.'
- Letters and the sounds they make are taught well at Key Stage 1. Lessons in letters and sounds are clear, exciting and engaging, so that pupils make good progress in reading by the end of Year 2.
- The school has worked hard to make pupils at Aveley confident readers. When asked about their current reading, a group of pupils in Key Stage 2 began an enthusiastic discussion about why Philip Pullman was a good writer, and whether he took too long to build up tension.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils believe it is important to behave well in lessons because they value learning. Even in lessons where teaching is not good, pupils encourage each other to stay on task and work out what to do.
- Parents, staff and pupils have very few concerns about behaviour and safety, and pupils at both key stages feel safe around the school.
- The school fosters good relationships between different groups of pupils. Pupils play very well with each other in the playground, and behaviour is orderly at lunchtime. Girls and boys play each other's games and share playground space well.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now average. Pupils have responded well to the school's strategies to improve attendance, and awards for 100% attendance are regularly given out and highly prized.
- Pupils understand very clearly the school's systems for improving behaviour, and they think they

work. A boy in Year 2 explained, 'When you're sent for reflection, it's such hard work working out why you don't behave, you might as well just be good.'

- The school manages pupils' behaviour over time very well. Staff involve parents as much as possible to try and bring about consistent behaviour management between home and school. In the school's learning development centre, staff model good behaviour, and give pupils the strategies and opportunities to start afresh, if they have behaved in a way they regret.
- Pupils understand their own behaviours well and feel confident that they rarely bully each other. They describe how they sometimes have arguments and misunderstandings, but know how to resolve them. They enjoy using computers, and know what the e-safety risks are and how to avoid them.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although it still requires improvement, the school's leaders have improved the quality of teaching markedly over the last year. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. This is because the headteacher is ambitious and has high expectations which are shared by staff.
- The local authority has organised for Aveley to work in partnership with a seconded deputy headteacher to put in place a detailed lesson observation programme, which provides clear next steps for teachers, and targeted training.
- Arrangements for managing the performance of teachers are not yet effective or rigorous enough. Teachers are not held to account for the performance of groups of pupils, particularly the more-able pupils. Senior leaders meet with teachers in order to monitor pupils' progress, identify underachievement and set targets intended to improve pupils' results. However, these targets are not linked to the management of teachers' performance.
- Parents feel the school communicates well with them, and is open and welcoming if they have any concerns.
- The school develops effective strategies to promote equality of opportunity. For example, pupils from a variety of different groups commented on how the school website's learning programme, 'Education City' is easy to access and supports them at home with what they learn at school.
- Pupils enjoy the range of activities on offer. The provision of French at the school is outstanding. Attendance at before- and after-school clubs is high, and pupils develop their social skills through activities which require them to work with pupils from other year groups. Parents comment that their children settle in well in the Reception Year, and pupils describe the school as a place where everyone looks out for each other.
- The school tackles discrimination by working with pupils to reflect on and improve behaviours that might cause offence. One girl in Key Stage 2 said, 'Everybody falls out sometimes. But the school makes sure we always fall back in.'
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Although the governing body has high aspirations with regard to pupils' achievement, it is still developing its expertise in setting challenging targets for the progress of groups of pupils and in devising ways to keep a close check on pupils' progress.
 - The governing body has good procedures for holding the headteacher to account through its performance management arrangements.

- The governing body makes good use of the pupil premium funding to overcome barriers to learning by resourcing the school's learning development centre.

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	114836
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	401470

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	354
Appropriate authority	Thurrock
Chair	Alistair McPherson
Headteacher	Nicola Shadbolt
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2010
Telephone number	01708 865868
Fax number	01708 869375
Email address	admin@aveleyprimary.thurrock.sch.uk

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