

William Bellamy Primary School

Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, Essex, RM10 7HX

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- More-able pupils do not make enough progress in lessons because the work is sometimes too easy for them. This results in fewer pupils gaining the top levels in the national tests at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching varies too much across the school, with not enough that is good or outstanding.
- The way that teachers mark pupils' books and give feedback to help pupils improve is inconsistent in quality and not effective in some classes.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is not consistently helping pupils make the good progress they need to make from their low starting points, particularly in their communication skills.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' attitudes towards the school and in lessons are very good. Pupils are well behaved, courteous and respectful. They love the school's 'stay green' policy towards behaviour, work and attendance.
- The school manages the behaviour of pupils well and provides good support, for example, through the nurture unit, for those whose behaviour is sometimes challenging; this results in good improvement.
- The leadership, with good support from the temporary governing body, has coped remarkably well with the recent amalgamation of two large schools, one of which was closed. Morale of staff is very high and the leadership has the confidence of parents, staff and the local authority.
- Pupils' attendance has risen year on year and is now above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place over two days with a team of six inspectors, four of whom were present on one day only.
- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, or part lessons, an assembly and a poetry recital.
- They held discussions with pupils during lessons, around the school and in two organised meetings. Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, local authority adviser, the special educational needs coordinator, governors, parents, teachers with subject and other responsibilities, the family liaison officer, teachers and support staff.
- Inspectors analysed the 53 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including minutes of meetings of the governing body, the draft school improvement plan, draft self-evaluation form, recent reviews of the school by the local authority and its annual report on the school, tracking data, policies, a range of pupils' work and records of the monitoring of lessons.
- The views of eight parents from the Parent View survey were taken into account.

Inspection team

Helena McVeigh, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Glynis Bradley-Peat	Additional inspector
Shelley Davies	Additional inspector
Lucia Devine	Additional inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional inspector
Sandra Teacher	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- William Bellamy Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school. In April 2012, the school was formed from the amalgamation of the junior and infant schools on adjacent sites. Both schools were of above-average size. The infant school, which closed in April 2012, had been given a notice to improve when inspected in October 2011.
- The William Bellamy Primary School has the same unique reference number (URN) as the former junior school, which came out of special measures in October 2010.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is around the national average at 9.3%, while 8.8% are supported through school action plus or with a statement, which is slightly above the national average. Their needs include physical disability, behaviour and emotional difficulties, autism, moderate learning difficulties, speech and language, and specific learning difficulties.
- Nearly 60% of the children are eligible for the extra funds provided through the pupil premium, which is well above average.
- A high proportion of pupils (36%) are learning English as an additional language, which is well above average.
- There is a wide range of different ethnic groups in the school, with over 60% from minority ethnic groups. The largest ethnic groups at the school are White British (38%) and Black African (30%).
- 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more of it is at least good by:
 - sharing the good practice that exists across the school more widely and continuing to provide opportunities for staff to visit other schools where practice is outstanding
 - ensuring that teachers' assessment and feedback to pupils reflect the good practice that exists in some classes and show pupils what they need to do to improve
 - make sure that time is made for pupils to read teachers' comments and respond
 - ensuring that planning for mathematics includes problem-solving activities that involve more real-life examples
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to make use of information and communication technology.
- Improve the teaching and learning in the Reception classes through:
 - better planning that identifies more clearly what children are expected to learn from activities
 - better record keeping of children's progress across the areas of learning
 - more interaction between adults and children to help children make progress and improve their communication skills.
- Ensure that teachers enable the more-able pupils to make consistently good progress in lessons by:
 - planning activities for them that are more open-ended and demanding
 - spending less time with whole-class activities so that more-able pupils and others have more

time to learn at their own pace and level

- taking advantage of the number of extra adults in each class to work with smaller groups on activities that are matched to pupils' different levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils start in the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and knowledge levels that are well below what are expected for their age. Many are learning to speak English as an additional language. Most make good progress in the Nursery, particularly in their social and personal development. Progress in the Reception classes is only adequate and many children could be making better progress than they currently do.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make adequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics, but not enough are making good progress. The proportion attaining the expected Level 4 is in line with the national average in English and in mathematics, but is below average for the proportion reaching the higher Level 5. Some who start well in Year 3 do not attain the highest levels at the end of Year 6 because teaching is too often aimed at those of middle and low ability. However, two boys gained Level 6, which is the expected level for 14-year-olds, in mathematics in 2012.
- Most pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, make good progress through Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. They are learning to read well and benefit from the improved teaching of phonics (the linking of letters and sounds).
- The results in 2012 for boys were below those for girls at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, and below the national averages. By the end of Year 6, the gap between boys and girls has closed.
- Pupils eligible for the additional pupil premium funds did better than their peers in terms of the proportion attaining the expected Level 4 or above in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2011 (the last year for validated results), but were below for the top levels. These pupils also did better than their peers nationally.
- Pupils of Black African origin make good progress, and better than that of the other main ethnic group in the school, White British, but both groups achieved results in English and in mathematics that were better than those of similar groups across the country in 2011. Results across the board dipped in 2012, but the current progress of pupils in Year 6 indicates that they are on track to make at least the expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of the academic year. More pupils are also on target to achieve Level 6 in mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is not enough good or outstanding teaching throughout the school. The most common weakness is that teaching is too often aimed at the pupils of middle or low ability, who make reasonable progress, but expectations are not high enough and work is sometimes too easy for the most able pupils.
- Teaching in the Reception classes requires improvement as planning does not focus sufficiently on what children will learn and record-keeping is limited. Adults do not interact enough with children to help them improve their communication skills, which are often weak. Leaders have enlisted local authority support to improve teaching in the Reception classes and have asked the Nursery teacher to oversee all of the early years, but there has not been enough time to reap the benefits of these initiatives in the classroom.
- The way that teachers check pupils' work in books is inconsistent and, in some cases, is not good enough. All teachers mark books regularly and include some feedback comments, but these do not always show pupils how to improve their work. There is some very good practice. For example, in some Year 5 and Year 6 books, teachers asked pupils to rewrite highlighted text and make suggested changes or amendments. Pupils were given time to respond and showed clear improvements in their writing. There is not enough of this good practice across all classes.

- Teachers usefully plan together, but the plans do not always provide good enough real-life problem-solving activities in mathematics or activities that will really stretch the most able pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in most lessons by teaching assistants and learning support assistants who work with them, and they make good progress. These extra adults often have little to do during introductions to lessons.
- All teachers have established productive and respectful relationships with pupils and they manage behaviour extremely well. This contributes to the progress that pupils make in lessons.
- All teachers share with pupils what they are expected to learn in lessons and make good use of 'working walls' to help pupils know how well they are learning.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards to capture pupils' interest and attention and share examples of pupils' work with the whole class. There is too little use of information and communication technology by pupils themselves.
- In the more effective lessons, enthusiastic teaching and effective questioning prompted thoughtful extended responses from pupils, encouraged pupils to share their ideas, and challenged them to extend their answers. Teachers emphasised the meanings of words to encourage the development of literacy, for example words such as 'balance', 'sequencing' and 'muscles' in a physical education lesson.
- Much of the phonics teaching is good and pupils are grouped appropriately according to the level of their skills. Pupils are beginning to use the skills they learn in these sessions effectively in other subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and to school. They feel safe, mainly arrive on time and attend well. They are courteous towards each other and adults, and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The school manages the behaviour of pupils extremely well and the 'stay on green' system is appreciated by pupils and parents alike; some parents continue to use it at home with their children.
- There is good support for those who present challenging behaviour through the nurture class, where they are helped to improve both their behaviour and attendance over time. Exclusions have been reduced and the school plans to make arrangements to eliminate the need for these in the future.
- Attendance has improved significantly in the past two years as a result of the school's effective range of approaches, including public displays of attendance records and badges and bracelets that are given for good attendance. Attendance is now above the national average.
- Children report very low levels of bullying and say that these are dealt with well. Pupils are encouraged to play with each other. The pupils who are 'squad leaders' play an important part in encouraging children to play together and promote good behaviour at play times. The school has regular assemblies to celebrate friendship.
- A very few examples of low-level off-task behaviour occur when lessons are dull and pupils do not have enough to do.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has managed the recent amalgamation extremely well, with evident impact on the positive atmosphere for learning in both parts of the school and good staff morale. Senior leaders have also coped with recent key staff absences for maternity leave, secondment and sickness. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have divided their time well between the two sites and their impact can be seen particularly in the improving quality of teaching in Key Stage 1.

- Leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning and involved the local authority and local headteachers in a recent review of teaching and learning. The school's draft self-evaluation and development plan draw well on this monitoring and are accurate. Promotion is linked well to teachers' performance, with steps taken to tackle underperformance and to reward consistently good performance.
 - The local authority has provided good support to the school before, during and after the amalgamation. They have a great deal of faith in the leadership and particularly in the headteacher.
 - Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of how the school's leaders are driving improvement. There is a lot of trust and confidence in the headteacher, who has demonstrated that she has the ambition and drive to make rapid improvements. The governors described the headteacher as a 'transformational leader' who is open and transparent.
 - The curriculum provides pupils with good breadth and balance, including good opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Drama sessions engage children extremely well and promote learning in a range of subjects, including science, literacy and history. All Year 5 children benefit from a whole-class violin lesson each week and they have made good progress in learning how to play and to read music. Art plays an important part in the curriculum and children learn about different faiths and cultures in religious education and assemblies.
 - All aspects of safeguarding are dealt with appropriately and meet statutory requirements.
 - The school takes its responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity seriously and has established an ethos where there are excellent relationships between different ethnic groups. Additional funds are used to overcome the disadvantage of eligible pupils and to benefit others. For example, the school uses funds to pay for a drama teacher who runs poetry sessions and drama clubs as well as in-class drama, which is helping to raise pupils' self-esteem, confidence and literacy skills. The school pays for these children to have breakfast, trips and violin lessons in school as well as for extra adults to support booster classes and interventions to improve their progress.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The newly formed temporary governing body has contributed well to the success of the amalgamation and the strategic direction of the school. Governors challenge school leaders about performance data, how the school compares with others and what needs to be done to improve further. They have had regular training, including whole-day sessions on performance data. They know about the quality of teaching and how the leadership's monitoring is identifying underperformance and how this has been tackled, including taking difficult decisions about the continued employment of staff. They indicate that senior leaders are extremely good at identifying and developing potential leaders as a result of the review and target-setting process for teachers. They have agreed to the recruitment of additional high-quality staff to boost the leadership team. They oversee effective management of the school's budget, including the use of the additional pupil premium funding, and ensure that these have benefitted eligible pupils.
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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	101226
Local authority	London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	400032

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	934
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathy Dee
Headteacher	Joanne Preston
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 October 2010
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