

Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery

Kenmore Avenue, Harrow, HA3 8LU

Inspection dates 15–16 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- The headteacher's focus on making teaching better has led to remarkable improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement over the last year.
- Pupils' progress has accelerated in all year groups and their achievement is good.
- Teachers plan lessons well. They have high expectations of pupils and are very clear about what pupils are learning in lessons.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge.
- The additional provision for disabled pupils is very effective. The support provided for these pupils, particularly by learning assistants, is extremely strong.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe and their attitudes to learning are positive. Many spoke of learning as being important to them. As one said, 'Learning is what it is all about.'
- Governors have worked with the senior leadership team to ensure that the expansion of the school has been smooth. They have high expectations, ask demanding questions of leaders and check on pupils' progress regularly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes teachers spend too long on the introductions to lessons and pupils do not have enough time to take part in interesting activities. On occasions, the work is not hard enough for the most-able pupils.
- Teachers do not always ask pupils challenging enough questions. Their questions are sometimes too easy or require short answers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 31 lessons or part lessons. They also attended two assemblies, a singing practice and listened to pupils read.
- Nine observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed senior leaders feeding back to teachers on pupils' learning and progress in lessons. A learning walk of short lesson observations was carried out with the headteacher.
- Meetings took place with governors, staff, two groups of pupils and two local authority representatives.
- The returns from 77 staff questionnaires were analysed, along with 63 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents informally in the playground before school.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and scrutinised documents including records of pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and development plan and behaviour and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Susan Williams, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Ian Robert McAllister	Additional Inspector
Michelle Pickering	Additional Inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds including Indian, African, Asian and White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is much higher than found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and supported by school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school is an additionally resourced mainstream school for 18 disabled pupils.
- No alternative provision is used by pupils.
- The school was formerly an infant school. It expanded to take Years 3 to 6 in September 2011 and changed its name to Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery.
- A new headteacher took up his post in September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that significantly more is outstanding by ensuring that teachers:
 - begin lessons at a brisk pace and allow pupils to go onto activities to support their learning more quickly
 - set work in lessons that is always demanding enough for the more-able pupils
 - include a range of imaginative and exciting activities in lessons
 - challenge pupils by using more open and probing questions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school in Nursery and Reception with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age and leave with standards slightly lower than those nationally. This represents good progress. There was an improvement in the standards reached by children at the end of Reception last year.
- Pupils' attainment at in Key Stage 1 is broadly average. There were improvements last year in reading, writing and mathematics. The large majority of pupils in Year 1 reached the required standard for the national screening check in phonics (the sounds that letters make). This is above the national average.
- Pupils enjoy reading and understand how this helps them in school. One pupil said, 'I like reading, it helps me with my writing.' Another said, 'It's not just in English, it also helps you in reading problems in mathematics.' Guided reading sessions ensure pupils make good progress in reading. For example, in a Year 6 session pupils were involved in different activities. Excellent questioning from the teacher and learning assistant helped pupils to think about what they were reading and ensured that they learnt well.
- The attainment levels of the Year 6 pupils who joined the expanded school in 2011 were well below the standards expected for their age. They made rapid progress to catch up, and had reached average standards by the time they left. Pupils in all year groups made good and in some cases outstanding progress last year.
- Pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium receive additional support from learning assistants as well as group tuition to help them catch up with other pupils. Checks made on the effect of this support every half term show that it is making a difference. Pupils from all groups are now making good or better progress, including Indian, African, Asian and White British pupils.
- Disabled pupils receive excellent support in lessons and mix well with other pupils. These pupils make good progress across the school and in Year 6 their progress is outstanding. Pupils with special educational needs also receive good support and make good progress in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and learning assistants have good subject knowledge. They meet every morning to plan together and this means learning assistants know exactly what to do with their pupils. The support for disabled pupils is particularly strong. Learning assistants skilfully help these pupils to take a full part in lessons and to work in groups with other pupils or on activities on their own.
- Teachers have high expectations and plan well-structured lessons. In the best teaching, teachers make lessons interesting and exciting. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson about report writing, the teacher's charismatic style and enthusiasm for her subject made learning fun. The very fast pace, expert questioning and work which were carefully planned to provide challenge for all pupils ensured that everyone made excellent progress.
- In a few lessons, the pace at the start is too slow, so pupils do not move on to activities quickly enough. Sometimes the work is not as interesting as it could be and, although pupils take part in different activities in groups, these activities do not always excite and engage them well enough. On occasions the work set for the more-able pupils is not challenging enough for them so that they find the work too easy and finish early.
- More typical good teaching was seen in a Year 4 mathematics lesson about compass points, where work challenged all pupils and the teacher questioned pupils expertly. The teacher set tasks very closely matched to pupils' different ability levels, including map work for more-able pupils. All the pupils were stretched and the teacher checked on progress and used demanding questions throughout the lesson to move them on. Pupils found the activities very interesting and this supported their good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive across the school. Learning is important to them. Pupils behave well and are polite and courteous to adults and each other. In a celebration assembly, pupils explained why their teachers had rewarded them for their hard work or effort in lessons and other pupils listened attentively.
- Parents were particularly positive about the 'Oscars' ceremony where pupils were rewarded at the end of last year. They spoke of how proud their children had been and how this had helped their attitudes to work in school. The vast majority of parents say the school makes sure pupils are well behaved. Almost all staff thought behaviour is well managed.
- The school analyses the records of pupils' behaviour and checks that the actions taken have made a difference. Exclusions have reduced by half and none has been permanent. Records show that the school promotes good relations and equality of opportunity and that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying such as cyber, gender and homophobic bullying. School records show there is no bullying in school and pupils confirm this view. They say that they feel safe in school and that adults help them if they have a problem.
- As a result of thorough procedures, attendance has improved over the last three years.

The leadership and management are good

- The exceptional leadership of the headteacher, who is supported by a strong senior leadership team, has noticeably improved pupils' achievement since his appointment last year.
- The senior leadership team have focused on improving teaching. They have organised training, taught alongside class teachers and helped teachers to plan lessons. There are thorough systems for checking on teaching. Senior leaders observe teaching every half term, check on pupil progress data, look at books and talk to pupils about learning. This gives them an accurate picture of what teaching is like over time.
- These improvement measures have been successful and the quality of teaching has improved quickly. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated, most teaching is now good on a regular basis and some is outstanding.
- Systems for managing the performance of staff are very thorough. The school has introduced a new policy this year linked to the new Teachers' Standards which ensures that more experienced teachers have more challenging targets. These systems are used appropriately to reward good teaching.
- The local authority has worked helpfully with the school to support its transition to primary school status. Staff have had training in the teaching of English and mathematics and local authority advisers have worked with senior leaders to ensure systems to check on teaching are robust.
- Leaders ensure that the provision for disabled pupils is effective and that they are integrated well in school, receive excellent support in lessons and make good progress. The impact of this was clearly seen when disabled and able-bodied pupils played a game of wheelchair football, collaborating with each other and thoroughly enjoying themselves.
- The school's curriculum has supported improvements in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. It is enriched by additional activities such as a session about rain and gutters for Year 5 pupils, taught by one of the site staff, and a session for Year 6 pupils about the Second World War, led by a visiting drama group. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities with over 200 pupils attending a wide variety of clubs on Thursday, such as 'top trumps card games', plastic modelling, bowling, Spanish, Somali and street dance. These activities, and the opportunity for reflection in assemblies, support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Following the expansion and change of status in 2011, governors were determined that the school should be seen as one primary school within a year of re-opening. In this, they have been very successful. They know the school well and have a good understanding of data. The curriculum committee receives detailed updates on pupils' progress and challenges senior leaders to ensure the best for pupils. Governors have agreed additional staffing to support classes and small groups for pupils eligible for the pupil premium. They check on the progress of these pupils regularly and this has ensured they make good progress. Governors were involved in all interviews for posts when the school expanded. Performance management systems are rigorous and governors sign off recommendations for increases in pay. They are aware of the quality of teaching in school and receive regular updates from senior leaders. Chairs of committees ensure governors receive regular training. The governing body ensures that safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

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	102211
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	400182

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	685
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Scantlebury
Headteacher	Darren Aisthorpe
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 January 2011
Telephone number	0208 909 2992
Fax number	0208 907 3413
Email address	office@elmgrove.harrow.sch.uk

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