

Betty Layward Primary School

Clissold Road, London, N16 9EX

Inspection dates 21–22 November 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

- Teachers do not always match activities to the learning needs of pupils so that they are consistently challenged to make good or better progress.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to know how well they are doing and how to move on to the next level in their learning.
- Pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics is not yet good enough. Although progress is improving in these subjects there is still work to be done.
- The progress made by disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for pupil premium is at times slower than that of other groups of pupils.
- The school has revised how a range of subjects are taught in order to improve pupils' achievement but it is too early to assess the impact on improving pupils' writing, mathematics and communication skills.
- The recent changes in middle leadership, with a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching, have not yet had the best possible impact on pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher demonstrates strong leadership and a commitment to securing improvement in pupils' achievement. She has helped to ensure that all inadequate teaching has been eradicated.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is good. Pupils' progress in reading at the end of Year 6 and across the school exceeds that found nationally. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance has improved from below the national average to above average.
- The governors provide a good level of challenge and support to the headteacher. They work well with the headteacher to support staff to develop and improve on their practice in order to improve the overall quality of teaching. They have identified the need to check more closely on the achievement of different groups of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Some of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors undertook a number of short visits to several lessons to look at learning across different subjects and how teaching supports the learning of more-able pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Inspectors looked at the quality of work in pupils’ books and checked teachers’ marking. They looked at pupils’ work on displays around the school and listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors observed three school assemblies.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and senior and middle leaders. Other meetings were held with a group of teachers and two groups of pupils.
- Pupils’ behaviour at break and lunchtimes was observed.
- In addition, inspectors looked closely at the school’s self-evaluation report and examined the information on the achievement of pupils across the school and over the past three years. Monitoring records relating to the quality of teaching and learning were also examined. Minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding records and attendance figures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors took account of responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of parents and carers through the school’s own parent and carer survey.

Inspection team

Samuel Ofori-Kyereh, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Maria Coles	Additional inspector
Michael Elson	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Betty Layward is a larger-than-average size primary school.
- Almost half of the pupils are from White British backgrounds with the rest coming from different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, the additional funding for free school meals, is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- Since the previous inspection, a large number of teachers have left the school and new ones have joined.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The schools run exchange programmes with neighbouring private nursery providers and a secondary school to ensure smooth transition of pupils entering and leaving the school. As part of the exchange programme the school provides literacy development to Year 7 pupils and in return, receives specialist teaching in drama and design and technology.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better across the school by:
 - using assessment information more precisely to plan learning activities that are closely matched to the learning needs of all pupils
 - providing opportunities for pupils to review their own learning and respond to feedback through marking so that they know how well they are doing and the next steps in their learning.
- Raise pupils' standards of attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that writing skills are developed in a systematic manner as pupils move through the school
 - ensuring calculation and problematic skills are taught and developed progressively
 - ensuring that intervention activities support the learning needs of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for the pupil premium, so that they make good progress.
- Improve leadership and management in order to have more impact on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that middle leaders closely monitor and evaluate the changes to how different subjects are covered and taught and how they enable pupils to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and communication at a faster rate
 - ensuring that middle leaders support and check that teachers continually put in place the advice they receive to improve their teaching so that all groups of pupils they teach make good or better progress across the school
 - continuing the development of governors' skills in evaluating the achievement of different groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The vast majority of children join the Nursery class with skills, knowledge and understanding that are in line with expectations for their age. In the Nursery and Reception, children's social and physical development is promoted well through a wide range of activities. Children respond carefully to a balance of independent and adult-led activities which promote good concentration and cooperation. This is most evident by the creative activities, such as the 'messy play' in the role-play area. The children make good progress so that by the time they join Year 1, their attainment is a little above average. As pupils move up the school, they progress at different rates due to inconsistent teaching; as a result, pupils' overall achievement requires improvement.
- Until most recently, the weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 1 did not consistently sustain the progress that pupils make in the Reception Year. This resulted in a dip in pupils' attainment across subjects over the past 3 years and is currently broadly average. Although improvements in teaching are now more evident, it is yet to have marked impact on pupils' overall achievement.
- Younger pupils are able to apply their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) skilfully to recognise unfamiliar words. In well-structured lessons, pupils make good progress because teachers model how sounds are pronounced and blended for reading. However in some classes in Key Stage 1 pupils make slower progress, particularly in writing, because the teaching fails to provide challenge for pupils, especially the more able pupils.
- Pupils across the school generally read widely and fluently. They show good understanding of text and are keen to talk about the books they read. Most pupils are able to adopt different strategies to help them to pronounce new and difficult words effectively because time is devoted to reading every day in school. Parents and carers are helped by the school to support their children's reading at home on a daily basis.
- Generally, pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2 in reading, as a result of secure teaching of basic reading skills, continuous checking of pupils' understanding and instant teacher feedback on how to improve. Opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills are more limited and so progress in writing is at times slower.
- Pupils' work seen in lessons and in books in Key Stage 2 shows that, because of improvements in the quality of teaching, achievement in mathematics is improving; however, pupils do not yet make consistently good progress in mathematics. Some pupils still lack confidence in their use of appropriate calculation strategies and their problem-solving skills.
- The progress made by disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for pupil premium requires improvement. These pupils receive one-to-one support and participate in visits and trips as part of efforts to widen and enrich pupils' experiences through the school's policy for inclusion and promotion of equal opportunities for all pupils. The recent focused support for these pupils has not yet made enough impact on their learning to ensure that good progress is the norm. This is being addressed by the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Due to rigorous monitoring of lessons, the quality of teaching across the school has improved and all inadequate teaching has been removed. During this inspection, much of the teaching seen was good but there was too much that still required improvement. This was often because assessment information was not used consistently well to ensure that work was matched to the differing ability needs of the pupils.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge in English and mathematics and as such are able to explain concepts clearly. However, teachers' expectations and intervention activities are not always pitched at the right level for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported through pupil premium to enable them to consistently achieve well.

- Lesson are planned and reviewed to provide opportunities for pupils to grasp key concepts well. However, in a number of lessons observed, opportunities were not provided for pupils to develop literacy, numeracy and communication skills across different subjects.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Book scrutiny shows that there are missed opportunities for pupils to review their learning and respond to feedback from marking. Sometimes, marking fails to help pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do in order to take the next steps in their learning.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving but not consistently so in all lessons. In an outstanding mathematics lessons seen in Year 5, the teacher adopted skilful inquiry to help pupils to use inverse formulae to calculate an area of a space. All pupils were well supported and equipped with strategies and resources for calculations. In other numeracy lessons, these approaches were not fully in place. Reading is, however, taught well through the guided reading sessions and pupils make good progress.
- Teachers work hard at creating a purposeful learning atmosphere and often relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Pupils' social and moral development is well developed through activities that promote cooperative learning.
- Teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is often good because of the good balance struck between adult-led and child-initiated activities.
- Pupils' learning is extended effectively through home-based projects. There is a consultation with parents and carers in identifying strategies which help their children learn best at home.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good because the efforts of the school to improve behaviour have been most effective. Generally, pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and it is only when the quality of teaching fails to capture the interest of pupils that interest and positivity wanes.
- Pupils are polite and relate well towards each other and adults around the school. Pupils understand and respond well to the school's expectation of how they should behave. The vast majority of parents, carers and pupils indicate that behaviour is good in the school.
- In discussions with inspectors, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They indicate that occasionally, bullying such as name-calling does occur but instances are infrequent and the school deals with such incidents effectively. The pupils spoke positively about the buddy system which creates opportunities for pupils to assume responsibilities in giving first-hand support to pupils who feel vulnerable.
- The vast majority of parents and carers report that they are confident that their children feel safe at school and are well looked after. Pupils also state that they feel safe in school. Pupils understand the risks they may be exposed to and how to respond to them in order to keep themselves safe. They affirm that they are happy at school because they are well cared for by teachers.
- Pupils' attendance has improved from below average and is now above average. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons because the school has worked very well with parents and carers to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher has communicated high expectations and a clear vision for improvements during a period of considerable change. The overwhelming majority of staff indicate their full support for her drive for improving standards and this view is shared by parents and carers and governors. However, the school's leadership and management are not yet good because there have been some recent appointments to the middle leadership and it is too early for the school's strategies to have successfully eradicated all inconsistencies in teaching and improved pupils'

achievement to a higher level.

- Joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher demonstrate that their judgements about teaching are accurate. However, the senior leaders have yet to strengthen the role of the new middle managers so that they consistently provide support and challenge for teachers across the school in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that good teaching is embedded across the school.
- The school's performance management systems are closely linked to teachers' annual performance targets. These targets are focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and are closely linked with pay progression.
- The school is committed to improving the equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff and any form of discrimination is tackled. Staff are becoming more confident in collecting and using information on all pupils to plan lessons to meet their varying needs, especially of the more-able, but this remains work in progress.
- The leaders and managers who are new to their roles have worked well to make changes to the range of subjects taught in the school. There are now more opportunities for pupils to develop their reading, writing and communication skills so that they make faster progress across all subjects. However, it is too early for these changes to have made an impact on pupils' achievement.
- The school provides a range of opportunities for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through well-organised school assemblies. A wide range of art, sport and music activities exists to help pupils to develop cultural awareness and the social skills necessary for a successful future life. Other activities, for example the young apprenticeship projects, provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the local and global societies.
- The local authority has supported the school in eradicating inadequate teaching and creating a positive atmosphere for learning.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body supports the headteacher in securing improvements across the school by challenging weaker practices. The recent restructuring of the governing body with the recruitment of new members has helped to better define the responsibilities of each committee. Governors have received a wide range of relevant training which has equipped them with skills and knowledge essential for performing their duties. The governors visit the school frequently to enable them to collect first-hand information. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They understand data on pupils' progress. Their knowledge of what happens in the school helps them to challenge the school leaders effectively but these efforts are recent and have not had time to make marked improvement on pupils' achievement across the school. Governors fulfil their statutory duties by making sure that the safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place to keep pupils safe. The governors monitor and manage the finances of the school well to ensure that funds are spent on improving resources and the outdoor areas, especially the woodlands, so that they provide rich experiences and better outcomes for pupils. Currently, the governors ensure that the pupil premium is spent on recruiting staff to provide one-to-one support for pupils who require additional support for their learning. In addition, the pupil premium is spent in acquiring educational resources necessary for pupils who are eligible for extra support. However, the achievements of these groups of pupils are still below national averages.

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	131706
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	402499

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	456
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Brooks
Headteacher	Maureen Jarrett
Date of previous school inspection	21-22 November 2012
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