

Bond Primary School

Bond Road, Mitcham, London, CR4 3HG

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2013

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		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching varies considerably from year to year and from class to class. Some teaching is good or outstanding; some is mediocre or weak. This is reflected in the inconsistent progress made by different groups of pupils.
- Teachers sometimes do too much of the talking, and this means that pupils do not always have enough chances to find things out for themselves and discuss ideas with one another.
- Pupils' overall achievement is not yet good.
- Their attainment in the national tests taken at the end of Years 2 and 6 varies from year to year, but is generally below average.
- Pupils generally make expected progress in English and in mathematics. Too few make more than expected progress.
- Sometimes lessons move too slowly and time is wasted.
- Sometimes the work set is either too demanding or too easy, so that pupils make uneven progress.
- Leaders and managers are not always rigorous enough in their monitoring of teaching and learning. Governors do not always hold leaders sufficiently to account for this inconsistency.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has improved in some areas but not others. Attendance has improved. However, teaching is not yet good overall.
- Pupils, especially the younger ones in Years 1 and 2, do not always have the chance to improve their writing skills by writing at length across a range of topics in history, geography and science.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well and get on well with one another. They are eager to learn. They attend regularly. They feel safe at school.
- Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong, so that they respect one another's values.
- The school successfully promotes a love of reading.
- The exciting trips, visits and activities promote pupils' love of learning and raise their aspirations.
- Parents appreciate the links between school and home and feel well informed.
- Teachers mark pupils' work helpfully, offering clear guidance on how to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons, taught by 15 class teachers, across a range of subjects, most being observed jointly with the headteacher or her deputy.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at samples of their work and attended assemblies.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and teachers with responsibilities for specific subjects, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 26 questionnaires.
- There were 11 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors used these and also spoke to several parents during the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including development plans, the self-evaluation report, local authority evaluation reports, the data on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding information, records relating to behaviour and safety, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Ann Longfield	Additional inspector
David Storrie	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bond Primary, which has two classes in each year group, is larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be 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 higher than the national average.
- Around five pupils out of six come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, and this proportion is much higher than usual. Over three fifths of pupils speak English as an additional language, and this proportion is much higher than average.
- An average proportion of pupils are on the special needs register, both at 'school action' and at 'school action plus', together with those with statements of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school does not have alternative provision, for example, any resource unit for pupils with special educational needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Teachers should make sure, in all lessons, that they:
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to learn independently
 - keep up a brisk pace in lessons, so that pupils do not spend too much time listening passively to the teacher
 - always set work that is neither too easy nor too difficult.
- Leaders and managers should improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is all good or better by:
 - visiting lessons more frequently to make sure that all teachers are performing to the standard of the best
 - sharpening up planning for improvement, with clear objectives for teachers and tighter time scales to ensure these are met
 - making sure that they have an overview of how well teachers are performing over time.
- Make sure that there are more chances for pupils, particularly those in Years 1 and 2, to write at length on a range of topics across the whole curriculum in order to develop their writing skills.
- Governors should hold school leaders more rigorously to account for improving the quality of teaching by asking searching questions about the link between the performance of individual teachers and pupils' progress.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils generally make expected progress from their starting points, but do not always make the rapid progress they need, to have the best possible chance in their future education. This is why pupils' achievement requires improvement.
- Children begin the Nursery and Reception classes with language, number and social skills which vary but which are typically below the levels expected for their age. Many speak English as an additional language. Their needs are quickly identified, and they make a good start in acquiring language skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Overall, pupils obtain below-average results in the tests taken at the end of Year 2, and leave with below-average results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6. However, rates of progress vary too much between year groups and between classes within the same year group. This reflects inconsistency in the quality of the teaching.
- The school successfully teaches the youngest children their sounds and letters, and how these combine to form words. As a result, pupils in Year 1 did better than average in the 2012 national test of their ability to read familiar and unfamiliar words. The school promotes a love of reading in all its pupils and, as a result, their reading skills throughout the school are relatively strong, and pupils told inspectors of their enjoyment of reading.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively, so that they quickly catch up and do as well as the other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive support in class and in small withdrawal groups and make the progress typically expected of them.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to benefit the pupils concerned. Nationally, the attainment in English and mathematics of pupils supported by this extra funding is around two and a half terms behind that of pupils not supported by it. At Bond Primary, however, pupils entitled to this support are typically between a term and a half behind all other pupils in the school in English and mathematics. This shows that the support given to these pupils is helping to close the gap between them and their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement, because the quality is inconsistent. There are sometimes wide differences in the quality of teaching and learning between year groups and between classes within the same year group. Over time, the teaching has not been good enough to promote good achievement.
- In the best lessons, the pace is brisk and pupils are encouraged to settle to their own research as quickly as possible. In one lively Year 3 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils moved swiftly from learning about compass points to using compasses to find directions for themselves. Sometimes, however, too much time is wasted settling down to tasks.
- In the best lessons seen, teachers used questioning effectively to help pupils think for themselves. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils were asked challenging questions, such as why it was necessary to use technical words, and the pupils responded with a range of thoughtful answers. However, in other lessons, teachers explain too much that pupils could find out for themselves, and this hinders them from discussing ideas with one another or doing their own investigations.
- Pupils learn best when teachers set work that is matched accurately to their abilities. For example, in one Year 6 mathematics lesson to find fractions of sums of money, there were well-planned levels of difficulty in the exercises set for pupils, so that each received work with a good level of challenge.
- The level of challenge, however, is not consistent in every lesson. Sometimes work set is too

easy, so that some pupils finish early and are uncertain what to do next. On other occasions, the work set is too difficult, and pupils are not clear how to tackle the task. As a result, their learning slows.

- Teaching assistants provide caring and effective help, enabling pupils with a range of additional needs to keep up with others.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities well. Pupils are keen to help others, for example, by acting as 'reading champions' to promote reading throughout the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their curiosity about the world around them. For example, children in the Reception class were enthralled by a lesson in which they sang and made up their own actions to illustrate the life-cycle of a butterfly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school is inclusive, and pupils from all backgrounds and heritages get on well with one another. Pupils are polite, considerate and respectful towards adults and one another. They told the inspectors that they felt safe and happy at school, and that they enjoyed their lessons. They confirmed that the good behaviour seen during the inspection was typical.
- Inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and there are positive attitudes to learning in the classroom. The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes are ready to play nicely and take turns on the equipment.
- Most of the parents and carers reported in discussion with inspectors that they were happy with the school and that it keeps their children safe and happy. A few expressed concerns about bullying. Inspectors explored each concern with school leaders and received sufficient evidence that the school deals effectively with occasional incidents where pupils are unkind to one another.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying means and of different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying. They told inspectors that, though there was scarcely any actual bullying, occasionally, pupils had quarrels. In these instances the adults sorted things out quickly.
- Attendance has improved over recent years and is now average. The school has worked hard to achieve this improvement. For example, breakfast club provides pupils with a stimulating start to the day and this has helped to raise attendance.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching and pupils' achievement are not yet good.
- Nevertheless, there are strengths within leadership and management. The headteacher and her deputy have created a happy and harmonious school, in which staff report that they feel valued and supported.
- Leaders have prioritised addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. As a result, for example, there has been a strong focus on improving pupils' vocabulary, and inspectors saw plenty of examples of dictionaries and thesauruses used in a practised way by the pupils.
- However, leaders have been less successful in raising the quality of all teaching and learning to the level of the best. There are too few classroom visits by school leaders, and evaluations tend to err on the side of generosity. Plans to improve the quality of teaching do not identify precisely what needs to be achieved, and the time scale for improvements is not urgent enough. There is little clear overview of each teacher's performance over time, to ensure that there is a pattern of improvement.

- The school's evaluation of its own performance is not always rigorous enough. For example, the school describes pupils' achievement as good, whereas national data, school data and inspectors' observation of pupils' learning and progress over time all point to achievement that is broadly average. The local authority does not sufficiently challenge the school on its somewhat overgenerous self-evaluation.
 - The school keeps pupils safe and ensures that those who work with them have been properly checked.
 - Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school trips and visits to places of interest, such as the Natural History Museum, and particularly enjoyed residential stays in Sayers Croft. Such activities broaden their horizons and develop their curiosity about the world around them.
 - The curriculum provides a sound focus on the key skills of English and mathematics. However, pupils are given too few opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English. Younger pupils have too many pre-printed worksheets to cut and stick or colour in, and this hinders their writing fluently on topics that stimulate and interest them.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body takes an active interest in the school and works supportively with school leaders and staff. It is up to date in gathering the latest information, for example, using the online information on pupils' achievement, the Ofsted 'dashboard', on the day it came out. Governors have an accurate grasp of the attainment and progress made by the pupils. However, the governing body tends to take on trust the school leaders' somewhat overgenerous view of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. As a result, governors have not held school leaders sufficiently to account for weaker areas of the school's performance. Governors recognise that they do not sufficiently probe the link between teachers' pay and the progress made by pupils. Since pupils' achievement is not good, there is not a close match at present between pupils' outcomes and how well teachers are paid. Governors maintain sound control of the allocation of the school's funds assigned for particular purposes. They fully understand, for example, the uses to which the pupil premium funding should be put, ensuring that those entitled to support receive it, and that the impact of the extra support is checked. Governors are well trained. For example, those who attend safeguarding courses ensure that pupils are kept safe.
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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	102626
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	400560

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	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Krikhaar
Headteacher	Despo Stevens
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2009
Telephone number	020 8648 8757
Fax number	020 8646 7343
Email address	bondprimary@bond.merton.sch.uk

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