

Plumcroft Primary School

Plum Lane, Plumstead, London, SE18 3HW

Inspection dates 14–15 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Pupils' attainment has risen sharply over the past 18 months resulting in the vast majority of pupils making good progress from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good with some outstanding practice.
- Pupils' behaviour is good around the school and excellent opportunities are provided to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.
- The curriculum is engaging, captures pupils' interest and helps them to make good progress with their learning.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader and is supported well by a strong team of leaders and managers in his relentless drive for continued improvement.
- The governing body has been effective in working with senior leaders and the local authority to bring about improvements in pupils' achievement and in the quality of teaching.
- Parents and carers have confidence in the school; parental engagement is a strong aspect of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The incidence of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure the best possible progress.
- More-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in all lessons, with opportunities sometimes missed for them to take greater responsibility for their own learning.
- The good work the school has done to raise pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics is not yet fully embedded.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 teachers teach and visited 30 part lessons, of which four were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, five governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority representative and school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school’s progress-tracking data, planning and monitoring documentation, self-evaluation summary, the school development plan, the safeguarding policies, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and others completed by staff. They also talked with parents and pupils about the school’s work and listened to some pupils read.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patricia Underwood	Additional Inspector
Lee Selby	Additional Inspector
Victoria Turner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school. The school has three classes in each year group and the Early Years Foundation Stage includes morning and afternoon nursery provision.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups, of which the two largest minorities are pupils from a Black African and White British background.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well above the national average and a few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular pupils, including those eligible for free school meals) is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school part way through their education is above that found nationally.
- 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?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - setting accurate pupil targets in reading, writing and mathematics which are referred to regularly in lessons and feedback
 - providing appropriate opportunities for pupils to respond to the written feedback given so that they can take responsibility for their own progress
 - ensuring that all teachers provide work that stretches the more-able pupils and moves their learning forward as soon as they are ready for more challenge.
- Embed fully the good work done to raise achievement in mathematics and writing by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills in real-life situations
 - providing further and more frequent opportunities for extended writing across different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typically below the levels expected for their age. Most start in Reception at a level typically below expectations, and reach national levels of attainment by the end of the year.
- Children make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage and develop good language and communication skills, playing and cooperating well together.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 as a result of the good teaching and focused support they receive. Pupils have made stronger progress in reading and mathematics than in writing, but the rate of progress in writing is improving fast.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 has improved over the past two years. In 2012 it was broadly average in English and below average in mathematics. The school's accurate data show that current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve national levels of attainment in both English and mathematics. This demonstrates good progress in relation to pupils' well-below-average starting points.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups. They develop good learning and social skills which support their progress, are excited by the tasks set for them and are keen to contribute their ideas. They say that teachers make their lessons fun.
- Pupils in all years show pleasure and enjoyment in reading. Younger pupils learn to sound out words and to form the letters. The strong focus on language and vocabulary provides good support for pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English. Pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and is continuing to rise.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and their peers is narrow and closing rapidly because of closer monitoring of their progress, targeted support and a range of effective interventions. The average points scores (APS) of these pupils is now much closer to, and sometimes higher than, that of other pupils in the school in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do well and achieve broadly in line with similar pupils nationally because of the inclusive nature of the school, specialist interventions and the support they receive from skilled teaching assistants.
- Sometimes the most-able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because activities planned do not always maintain the challenge at an appropriate level throughout the lesson.
- Increasingly, pupils are given good opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in real-life situations and use extended writing across different areas of the curriculum. This remains a key priority for further development as it is not yet fully embedded in the life of the school.
- Pupils who join the school, part-way through their school career are monitored carefully to ensure they settle quickly and make good progress. However, not all make as rapid progress as others because of language difficulties. Nevertheless, they make good progress whilst at the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- School leaders have been relentless in bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching through appropriate support and professional development. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and is good throughout the school.
- Teachers check up on pupils' learning well during lessons. They make sure that pupils are aware of exactly what they will have been expected to learn by the end of the lesson and ask well-thought-out questions to test their understanding.
- Typically, teaching deepens pupils' understanding because teachers use assessment information

well to prepare tasks and activities that engage pupils and develop skills for life. For example, in mathematics pupils of all abilities learn how to use a variety of problem-solving strategies and English lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes.

- Teaching captures pupils' interest most of the time and encourages them to learn from each other. For example, group discussion in a mathematics lesson on applying problem solving strategies enabled all pupils to share different techniques and take charge of their own learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. Adults successfully build children's confidence and self-esteem through modelling good language development and providing resources that make learning a joyful experience.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils and ensure they are engaged in their learning and make good progress. They do this by breaking down problems into manageable steps so that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, for example, can access the learning effectively.
- Pupils enjoy their reading. Their guided reading lessons and individual support from teachers and skilled teaching assistants help them to become confident readers. Some of the weaker readers are able to use their skills of blending sounds together to read unfamiliar words correctly (phonics).
- The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the quality of marking is good overall with valuable comments on how to improve. However, written feedback in pupils' books is not always linked strongly enough to pupils' individual targets in literacy and numeracy. Sometimes opportunities are missed in lessons to make purposeful reference to pupils' targets. As a result, pupils' progress against these targets cannot be tracked systematically.
- In addition, pupils are not always encouraged or given sufficient time to respond to teachers' comments to act on the advice and reinforce their learning.
- In some lessons, the most-able pupils are not always stretched and teachers sometimes miss opportunities to give them challenging tasks early enough in lessons to enable them to reach their potential.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are courteous, friendly and show respect for each other and for adults. They are confident and eager to engage in discussions. They look forward to coming to school and have a real appetite for learning. They enjoy their lessons especially when they are challenging. As a result, attendance is above average and exclusions are rare.
- Although behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding, there are occasions when a small group of pupils is unable to maintain the level of concentration required for learning, particularly when a lesson is not engaging enough.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school, behaviour is always good and bullying is rare, and the school's own surveys show that their parents and carers agree with them.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of different types of bullying and the potential risks of the internet, including cyber-bullying. Pupils say that the school's promotion of anti-bullying through the curriculum has helped them further to understand bullying and unsafe situations. They have a great deal of confidence in their teachers in dealing with any unacceptable behaviour quickly and successfully should it occur.
- Pupils have a good understanding of rights, responsibilities and mutual respect, topics and values which are promoted through the school's 'International Primary Curriculum'.
- During group work, pupils interact with each other respectfully by listening to one another's view point and taking turns to speak.
- Incidents of any unacceptable behaviour that take place in the school are recorded. Although such incidents are few, the school has already identified the need to routinely analyse these incidents to see if there are any common features or trends which could be followed up.

- Inspectors' observations of lessons and break time show that boys and girls from all ethnic backgrounds mix and get on well with each other.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the leadership team have been successful in addressing all the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. Both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.
- The leadership team is supported very well by the governing body in its ambition to drive continuous improvements and raise pupils' achievement. As a result, there has been a sharp rise in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics across the school and this remains a key priority.
- Teachers who have responsibility for different phases of the school are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work regularly. As a result, they have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- The targets set for teachers are appropriately challenging and teacher's progress against them is closely monitored. This coupled with the support provided for weaker teaching is having the desired impact on pupils' learning and progress. However, the incidence of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure the best possible progress for all pupils.
- Teachers confirm that good support and opportunities for professional development is provided for staff. As a result, teachers gain confidence in further developing their teaching skills. The school's records show and inspection evidence confirms that most teaching requiring improvement has now moved to good.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. The school's own assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress are supported through the involvement of the local authority and strong links with a local school.
- School leaders have created good opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in real-life situations and to engage in extended writing across different areas of the curriculum. Fully embedding these opportunities across all aspects of the school's work is a current improvement priority which leaders are taking very seriously.
- The good curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop the broader skills they need to be successful citizens. In addition, it promotes the key skills of literacy and numeracy and supports the learning of pupils, including those with additional needs, to make good progress.
- Music and singing have a high profile in the school. Pupils enjoy learning French and there is good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
- The school ensures that there is an equality of opportunity for all pupils and that discrimination in any form is not tolerated. For example, pupils engaged in additional programmes to accelerate their learning are excited by the prospect of experiencing this inside the double-decker bus standing in the playground. In this way the school is always seeking to enhance the motivation of pupils from different backgrounds.
- The pupil premium has been used well to support and improve learning through the use of learning assistants and focused interventions that are monitored for their effectiveness.
- Very effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has been effective in providing the necessary support and challenge to bring about clear improvement. Governors have a good awareness of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics and how different groups of pupils are performing. They have had helpful training from the local authority on aspects such as performance management and data analysis. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and what needs to be done to improve it further. They have worked closely with the headteacher to ensure

that inadequate teaching is eradicated through the skilful management of teacher's performance. They monitor the impact of pupil premium funded actions to ensure that it is used in the best possible way. In addition, governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and meet all requirements so that pupils are safe in school.

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	100140
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	400393

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	638
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Austin
Headteacher	Richard Slade
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 October 2009
Telephone number	020 88541308
Fax number	020 83170026
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