

Whitmore Primary School

Bridport Place, London, N1 5JN

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Members of the governing body and all staff are fully committed to, and have begun the process of transforming, the quality of education provided by the school. They have very high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour.
- The school is led and managed extremely well. Senior leaders have been exceptionally effective in bringing about sustained improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement and behaviour, but realise that they must raise achievement further. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning are monitored meticulously to inform the highly effective improvement plans.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Although standards are still below average, pupils now make very rapid progress and the standards they attain are rising. The high numbers of pupils who do not speak English well quickly develop their language skills so that they can access all subjects.
- Teaching is never less than good and much is outstanding. Teachers plan in great detail so that pupils are fully engaged in their learning throughout each lesson.
- Teachers are remarkably consistent and accurate in the way they assess pupils' work. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons. They know they are learning well and enjoy coming to school. They feel safe, secure and behave exceedingly well. Their attendance has improved and is now above average.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children participate in a wide range of interesting and purposeful activities and make outstanding progress in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, including two joint observations with senior leaders. They looked at pupils’ written work in their books and listened to some of them read.
- Meetings were held with a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the School Committee, the executive principal, and school headteacher and other school leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and talked to some pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents and carers as they arrived with their children at school.
- They took account of 24 questionnaires returned by staff. Results from Parent View were not taken into account as too few parents contributed.
- Inspectors looked at a number of school documents, such as data about pupils’ progress, the school’s own self-evaluation and its development plan, evidence about monitoring and evaluating teaching, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.

Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Tomkins

Additional Inspector

Clementina Olufunke Aina

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Whitmore Primary School is part of a five-school federation and is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are from Black or Black British, any other White and any other mixed backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children of service personnel) is very high. Almost all pupils in this group are those eligible for free school meals, and some are looked after children.
- There are many more pupils than average who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra support through school action is above average and the proportions supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well above average.
- The school has an Autistic Resource Provision Base on site
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school has met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics further by maintaining the drive to share outstanding practice in teaching so as to achieve even greater consistency across all classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Their personal, social and language skills are promoted very well so that they become confident and settle in quickly. They are very well taught through purposeful and well-planned activities which children can choose for themselves and regular adult-led focused activities. The environment is interesting and stimulating; children persevere in their chosen activity and make rapid progress.
- The attainment of pupils who leave at the end of Key Stage 2 had been below average for several years, partly due to the high numbers of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. In 2012, when a new teaching system was introduced, the attainment of non-statemented pupils rose and was broadly in line with national averages. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs made good or better progress from their starting points.
- Although attainment is lower than the school would like, the current pupils on roll are making very rapid progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 in English and mathematics. They present their work really well through excellent support and guidance from their teachers and their own determination to succeed. Work seen in pupils' books shows they have made very rapid progress since the school joined the Best Start Federation.
- The school has a strong focus on helping pupils to become fluent readers. The comprehensive and systematic programme of tuition in phonics (the sounds letters make) and the school's Accelerated Reader programme have been very effective in quickly developing pupils' fluency in reading. Parents and carers are encouraged to listen to their children reading at home, and pupils read in lessons every day. Year 2 pupils read confidently and with feeling.
- The group of pupils in the Autistic Resource Provision Base are well cared for and supported. Pupils trust their carers. Teachers make good use of visual, physical and aural strategies to engage pupils well. They set clear individual targets and match activities extremely well to the needs of each pupil.
- In 2012, the majority of pupils were eligible for the pupil premium. A significant proportion of this group also had special educational needs. They did not attain as well as their peers in school or nationally but did make good or better progress. In English, they were almost a year behind other pupils, and in mathematics they were about six months behind. This year, there is no longer a gap between the two groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Since the school became part of the Best Start Federation, teaching has improved dramatically. All teaching is now at least good and much is outstanding. As a result, all groups of pupils across the school make very rapid progress.
- Teaching is remarkably consistent. Teachers know how well each pupil is doing through regular and accurate assessments and plan lessons in great detail. Resources to support learning are of exceptionally high quality and contribute very well to pupils' excellent presentation of their work.
- Teachers and supporting staff are energetic, enthusiastic and ensure that learning proceeds at a good pace. Pupils are fully engaged in their learning throughout lessons.
- The school's very effective marking policy is closely adhered to by all teachers. Pupils receive detailed feedback regularly and frequently on their written work so that they know what they did well and how to improve. They respond to teachers' marking with written comments to demonstrate they have understood the points that have been made about their work.
- Teachers manage their classes extremely well. Established routines employed by all adults ensure that pupils' behaviour always supports their learning very well.
- Partner work is organised very well and is very effective in promoting learning. Pupils generally work in pairs, often monitoring and supporting each other in turn and discussing thoughtfully

how to respond to their teacher's skilful questioning. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson, partners took it in turns to guide each other in reading a section of text then discussed a comprehension question.

- All teachers explain to pupils what they expect them to be able to do by the end of the lesson. Pupils are given these criteria for success so they themselves can assess how well they have done.
- Subject-specific vocabulary is always a focus in lessons. Teachers give pupils effective, consistent strategies and many opportunities to learn new words and their meaning. Consequently, pupils have extensive vocabularies for their age.
- The City Year (an education charity) provides enthusiastic and appropriately trained young volunteers to act as mentors and role models for pupils. Together with teachers, they help establish and maintain very good relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils like their teachers and support staff, and enjoy learning. They are proud of the progress they are making and say lessons are interesting.
- Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well. They are fully informed of their role in lessons and use exactly the same strategies as teachers to promote excellent learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour contributes extremely well to the calm, purposeful and orderly atmosphere in Whitmore Primary School. Pupils behave sensibly and courteously around the school. Their exemplary attitude to learning in lessons is a key factor in promoting their rapid progress. They are keen to learn and work hard.
- The school has a clear behaviour management system which teachers and other adults apply consistently. Pupils know the system well and are eager to keep their reward points for good behaviour. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem develop quickly; for example, when speaking to the whole class, they talk in an assured manner.
- The school monitors attendance closely and promotes the need for good attendance very well. Attendance has been improving and is now above average. Pupils feel safe, secure, valued and cared for at school.
- Although their playgrounds are small, pupils show appropriate consideration for others while playing. Adults monitor playtimes well and some older pupils, who take their roles as playground buddies seriously, ensure no one is left without someone to play with.
- Governors, parents and carers, and staff agree that pupils' behaviour at school has improved greatly. School records on behaviour are maintained well and show that incidents of misbehaviour and exclusions have reduced dramatically.
- Pupils are well aware of the school's focus on anti-bullying. They understand the concept of bullying well for their age. They think bullying at school in all its forms is rare and any incidents that do occur are tackled quickly and effectively by their teachers.
- Pupils have learned how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They can explain how to be safe on the road and when using the internet.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Governors and the senior leadership team have high expectations and a clear vision of excellence for the school, shared by all staff. They have worked relentlessly to improve behaviour and the quality of teaching so that pupils now make rapid progress, but they realise attainment must improve still further.
- The senior leadership team introduced the management systems of the Best Start Federation to quickly bring about the considerable improvements in all areas of the school's work. Senior leaders have a detailed and accurate knowledge of the school. There is a well-organised development plan that is being implemented successfully and monitored closely by senior leaders. The quality of teaching is checked rigorously and prompt action is taken to bring about

any required improvements. Teachers and their assistants receive very good professional development to improve their practice, such as coaching, mentoring and subject training.

- Pupils' progress is closely monitored to identify any who are underperforming and provide appropriate support for them. Regular assessment is used to identify where improvements in teaching are needed and the focus for subsequent subject training. English and mathematics coordinators ensure that teaching follows the subject programme closely.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. Assessments of children's development are fully recorded and moderated accurately. The strong focus on developing children's speech and language skills quickly ensures that they can access all subjects.
- School leaders ensure that the environment for learning is attractive and very well organised. Display for English and mathematics in every classroom is consistently clear and supports pupils' learning very well. The school offers a broad and balanced range of subjects enriched well through school trips and with many opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills. Topics are well chosen to appeal to pupils, for example work on Istanbul reflects the Turkish background of many pupils.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, through such things as Black History Month and a project on refugee children. Pupils have equal access to all subjects and activities, including the well-managed breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Following reviews, the local authority recognises that the school has outstanding leadership and management and now provides light-touch support only.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors, from the Federation Governing Body and the Whitmore School Committee, have a wide range of relevant skills and experience, augmented by training from the local authority and the Best Start Federation. They are well informed about the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and the way the school is using its income, through school leaders' reports and their own regular focused visits. They ensure teachers' movements up the pay scale are warranted and they ask challenging questions about how plans will improve pupils' achievement. Governors are very aware of how school leaders review teachers' performance and set them targets for improvement. They are involved in setting robust targets for the performance of the headteacher and in making good financial decisions, such as allocating the pupil premium appropriately. All statutory arrangements for safeguarding are securely in place.

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	100245
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	400353

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	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Brown
Headteacher	Penny Smith
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2009
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