

Friars Primary Foundation School

Webber Street, London, SE1 0RF

Inspection dates 13–14 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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

- Expectations of pupils' achievement are not high enough. While pupils generally make the progress expected of them from their starting points, few make rapid gains in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough. Teachers do not always use information about pupils' progress to plan lessons that are the right level of difficulty for their different abilities and progress slows.
- When teachers mark pupils' work, they do not always ensure pupils respond to comments, hindering the progress pupils can make.
- Teachers' planning does not always make clear what additional adults are required to do to support pupils' learning in lessons, particularly during whole-class teaching. This reduces their effectiveness.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders, including members of the governing body, have not maintained the school's high level of effectiveness. They do not review the quality of teaching frequently enough to ensure inconsistencies are promptly tackled.
- Improvement plans do not all have sufficiently challenging targets to make sure they secure raised achievement for pupils.
- The governing body does not analyse pupils' achievement information so that its members can challenge the school sufficiently to ensure it improves quickly.

The school has the following strengths

- Children learn well in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils appreciate the wide variety of interesting activities that the school organises for them. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and considerate towards each other. They behave well and their attitudes to learning are positive. They share their ideas with each other and work well together in lessons.
- They know how to keep themselves safe from harm and are confident staff will sort out any problems quickly if they occur.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and undertook six joint observations. They visited 16 lessons.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- The school website, development plans and records relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- The inspection took account of 22 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View), the results of a recent survey of parents' and carers' views conducted by the school, and 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diana Shepherd

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Friars Foundation Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one full-time Nursery classes and one Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. More pupils than the national average speak English as an additional language. Very few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or at school action plus is average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families) is above the national average. There are currently no looked after children or children of service families at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and senior leaders support several other local primary schools.
- The school organises and manages breakfast and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching to raise pupils' achievement, by:
 - making sure teachers match work closely to the learning needs of individuals
 - ensuring teachers' planning makes clear what additional adults are expected to do during lessons, particularly during whole-class teaching, so they play a full part in supporting pupils' learning
 - consistently encouraging pupils to respond to teachers' comments and feedback on their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders, managers and governors, by:
 - increasing the frequency of checks on teaching to make sure that priorities for development of teaching are addressed quickly and improvements are sustained
 - setting ambitious targets for improvement to make sure that all pupils fulfil their potential and reach the highest standards, and checking regularly how well these are being met
 - rigorously evaluating the quality of teaching and other aspects of the school's work by focusing on their impact on raising standards in English and mathematics
 - providing training for governors, which will make sure they can analyse pupils' performance and challenge school leaders regarding pupils' achievement.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils make consistently good progress throughout Years 1 to 6. Rates of progress vary between classes and subjects, linked to the quality of teaching. Progress is uneven so that pupils do not make consistent increases in their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has remained broadly average since the previous inspection. Expectations of higher-attaining pupils are not always high enough and they are not always set suitably challenging work to help them make rapid progress in their learning and reach higher standards.
- The progress of lower-attaining pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is also variable and requires improvement. They are not always well supported in lessons, particularly during whole-class teaching. Additional guidance during independent work, and extra sessions outside classrooms, are more effective. These promote their development of basic English and mathematics, as well as their personal and social skills.
- The progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, also requires improvement because rates of learning for these pupils are also variable, linked also to the quality of teaching in classes.
- The attainment at the end of Year 6 of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding shows improvement in 2012 compared with 2011. In national tests last year, the gap between Year 6 pupils who benefited from the pupil premium and other Year 6 pupils narrowed, particularly in reading and mathematics. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium were one term behind the others in reading and mathematics, a smaller gap to that found nationally, and one term ahead of their classmates in writing. This shows the effectiveness of the school's use of the pupil premium funding to provide breakfast and booster sessions in English and mathematics for eligible pupils in Year 6. However, their progress is more variable in other classes.
- Pupils are encouraged to read regularly. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example, enjoy listening to stories together at the end of the day. Older pupils benefit from reading independently at the start of each day. Together with opportunities to work with authors and poets, and themed events celebrating reading, this helps them to enjoy reading widely.
- While fewer pupils than the national average reached the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check, recent improvements to the way letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is taught in Years 1 and 2 is helping to build pupils' confidence in reading unfamiliar words.
- Children join the school with skills and capabilities that are below those expected for their age. In the Nursery and Reception classes, they make good progress to reach average attainment. Children's independence and confidence grow well because they benefit from a good balance of adult-led tasks and activities that they can choose for themselves in the indoor and outside areas.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching does not promote consistently good achievement over time. This is because teachers do not always use information from assessments to set work that is well matched to the full range of pupils' abilities. When all pupils are expected to complete the same tasks despite the range of abilities in the class, the pace of learning requires improvement because the work is too easy for some pupils, and too difficult for others.
- In their planning, teachers do not always make clear the specific contribution additional adults are expected to make to support pupils' achievement. When additional adults sit listening to the teacher instead of assisting those who need additional support, particularly during whole-class teaching, their impact on pupils' learning is diminished.
- When teachers mark pupils' work, they often provide them with helpful guidance about how to

make a piece of work better. However, although pupils in Year 6 are regularly encouraged to correct mistakes or attempt further challenges, teachers in other classes do not always make sure pupils reflect on their guidance to strengthen their learning.

- In Nursery and Reception, children enjoy a range of activities. Adults plan activities that children can choose for themselves that encourage their independence and help them to work and play well together. Adult-led tasks help them to develop their basic skills. Through discussion and questioning, adults extend children's learning. For example, children in the Nursery working with an adult enjoyed discussing what colour they would make when mixing two different-coloured paints together.
- Relationships between teachers, additional adults and pupils are good so that pupils are enthusiastic to learn. When teachers set pupils tasks to do together in pairs and small groups, their learning is often good and their personal and social skills are promoted well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy in school and have positive attitudes to learning in lessons. Respectful relationships are promoted successfully so that pupils from a wide variety of different backgrounds get on well together, although occasionally they need reminders about the behaviour that is expected at breaktime. Pupils are polite and welcoming.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Through assemblies and discussions, they know what constitutes bullying, and they are confident that any incidences of it occurring at the school are very rare, as the school's records show. They are extremely sure that staff at the school will help them should any problems occur.
- Anti-bullying events, advice and guidance on keeping safe when using computers, road safety training and cycling proficiency workshops all help pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm.
- Attendance rates are average and improving. The school is striving to reduce the amount of frequent absence by stressing to parents and carers the importance of attending school very regularly.
- The breakfast and after-school provision ensures that those pupils who attend enjoy a sociable start and end to the day.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its effectiveness are not always sufficiently robust to help leaders get a clear picture of the school's strengths or identify the most significant areas for improvement and set ambitious targets for improvement. They sometimes do not notice quickly enough that some pupils are not doing as well as they should.
- Sometimes, leaders and governors evaluate the quality of the school's work too highly. The information that the school gathers about pupils' progress is not always used effectively to measure the school's performance.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are not frequent enough to make sure that priorities for improvement are always securely addressed. They do not always focus on making sure that teachers set work that is the right level of difficulty for the pupils, and evaluate the impact of additional staff on pupils' learning. Consequently, the quality of teaching is variable and not enough is consistently good or better. For these reasons, pupils' achievement is not yet good and the promotion of equality and tackling of discrimination are not consistently robust.
- The school demonstrates capacity to improve further. Training and coaching for staff on phonics is helping pupils develop confidence in reading unfamiliar words. Workshops led by staff on reading and literacy for parents and carers help them to support their children's achievement at home. Leaders have successfully maintained the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils' positive behaviour and enjoyment of the school.

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully built effective partnerships that enhance the curriculum and the variety of interesting work that the school organises to develop pupils' interests. For example, reading and mathematics mentors from local businesses help selected pupils practise reading and mathematics skills to build fluency.
- There is strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because well-planned activities, visits and popular extra-curricular clubs broaden pupils' learning experiences and promote firm relationships. Lessons on musical instruments and singing, and workshops with professional musicians and performers, help pupils' self-confidence to grow.
- The local authority has worked with the school to encourage partnership work between the school and other local schools to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. However, it has not challenged the school sufficiently to improve pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors work supportively with school leaders and staff, but share the somewhat overgenerous view of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. This is because they rely heavily on the school's leaders for information about how well the school is performing and its effectiveness. They have not always made sure they have undertaken relevant professional training to support them in their roles and ensure they are fully conversant with pupil achievement information in order to contribute to the school's self-evaluation. As result, they are not yet confident to make comparisons of the school's performance against achievement nationally and to challenge the school to do better. Governors do not do enough to check the performance of all groups of pupils throughout the academic year. Governors are aware of teachers' salaries but procedures to manage the performance of teachers are not always demanding enough to sustain high-quality teaching and pupils' rapid progress. Governors are aware of the uses to which the pupil premium is put, but are not yet checking how effectively the funding is helping eligible pupils to catch up. They are careful to ensure that the school site is secure and well maintained. Procedures to keep pupils safe meet 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	100855
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	412202

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Mills
Headteacher	Justin Burt
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 July 2010
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