

Furness Primary School

Furness Road, London , NW10 5YT

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement is not yet good enough, despite recent improvements. The proportion of pupils making the progress they should in writing and mathematics varies too much across year groups in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is not always pitched at the right level for all pupils, particularly those who are capable of working harder.
- Some teachers do not check pupils' understanding regularly enough during lessons so that the pace of learning dips.
- Opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking are not yet consistent across year groups.

The school has the following strengths

- Effective staff training and rigorous management of staff performance have resulted in improvements in teaching. An increasing proportion of teaching is now good, but this has not been sustained for long enough to eliminate gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Senior leaders take a strong lead in driving change and have an accurate understanding of what they need to do to improve to further raise pupils' achievement
- Leaders, including members of the governing body, are ambitious for all pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Furness is a happy school. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. In some lessons, pupils' behaviour is excellent.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well.
- Links with parents and carers are strengthening, and relationships between home and school are positive.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 32 lessons or part lessons, listened to pupils read and attended an assembly for parents and carers. All teachers were observed at least once during the inspection. Three lessons were observed jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, and representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- There were not enough responses from parents and carers to the online Parent View survey for inspectors to take them into account. Inspectors met informally with parents and carers before and after school and during the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, the school's checks on how well it is doing and development plan, the governing body minutes, data on pupils' current performance, logs relating to behaviour and attendance figures.

Inspection team

Linda Pickles, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori-Kyereh	Additional Inspector
Ian McAllister	Additional Inspector
Claire Gillies	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- Furness Primary is larger than most primary schools.
- The school was federated with a local primary school in September 2012. The federation is led by an executive headteacher and one governing body.
- There is an early-morning breakfast club and after-school provision which is managed by the governing body.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than in most schools, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Over half of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, are looked after by the local authority and those from service families. This is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is well above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. In the previous inspection, pupils' achievement was judged to be inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate rates of progress in writing and mathematics so that more pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 achieve well by ensuring that teachers:
 - use assessment information more effectively to plan work at the right level of difficulty for all pupils and provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently
 - check pupils' understanding more closely in lessons and adjust tasks as necessary to increase the pace of learning, particularly for higher-attaining pupils
 - actively involve all pupils during whole-class teaching sessions so their learning and understanding can be checked more closely by the teacher.
- Accelerate pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring marking and feedback promote pupils' skills in analysis and evaluation in writing and mathematics
 - giving pupils more opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and feedback in their books to improve their work further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Despite recent success in raising pupils' achievement, improvement is still required because teaching does not always match the learning needs of pupils. As a result, some pupils in Key Stage 2 are not making the progress they should in writing and mathematics. Too few pupils are working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics because their knowledge and skills are not extended well enough and, consequently, their progress is slower.
- Pupils now have regular opportunities to write in different styles and for different audiences across subjects. Work in pupils' books shows that they are developing confidence in using their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems and to investigate number patterns. These improvements, however, have not been sustained for long enough to make up for previous underachievement.
- Generally, children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are well below those expected for their age. Children are now starting to make more rapid progress from their starting points because they settle quickly into school routines and their learning needs are well met. A higher proportion of children are now entering Year 1 with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is well taught and, as a result, pupils are making faster progress than in the past. This is because they can confidently use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read words they are unfamiliar with. In 2012, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected levels for phonics in the Year 1 national screening check was above the national average.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress because their needs are carefully identified and a range of effective strategies are put into place to improve their learning. This includes additional support for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. In 2012, pupils who benefit from the pupil premium attained higher than other pupils in the school in both English and mathematics, as measured by their average point scores at the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making progress in line with their peers. Some pupils supported at school action plus are now making more rapid progress than previously because teachers and support staff are well trained in developing pupils' speech, language and communication skills and good behaviour.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because some of the work pupils are given does not challenge them enough, and marking does not always show impact in pupils' work.
- In the less-effective teaching, assessment information is not used well enough to plan activities, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. Sometimes in lessons, the pitch of learning is too easy for some pupils and their progress is limited because they have to work at the speed of the whole class, rather than at a faster rate. Occasionally, the pace of learning is slower when pupils spend too long sitting and listening to the teacher and have limited opportunities to be actively involved in the lesson.
- Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work shows teaching is becoming more effective in promoting pupils' progress, but does not yet consistently extend the learning of higher-attaining pupils well enough. This is because planned activities do not move the learning on quickly enough for higher-attaining pupils and too long is spent rehearsing skills and knowledge with which they are already confident.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give guidance for pupils about how to improve their writing and mathematical skills, but opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' higher-order skills, such as analysis and evaluation.
- Pupils do not always respond to teachers' comments in order to make the improvements to their

work. Pupils know how well they are achieving and the targets they are working towards in English and mathematics. Pupils enjoy sharing and checking their work with partners and have regular opportunities to do so.

- In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use skilful questioning to check and deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils made good progress while exploring how to change an adjective into an adverb and then used this knowledge to improve their own creative writing.
- Pupils are taught the links between sounds and letters effectively. They enjoy reading and are encouraged by teachers to read widely for pleasure.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and relationships between adults and children are positive because pupils' work is valued. Additional adults make a good contribution to the learning and progress of the pupils they work with because they are well trained.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils feel safe in school and think that adults look after them well. They are confident that any concerns they have will be sorted out. Pupils play safely and sensibly in the playground and at breaks and lunchtimes, and are kind and polite to each other. Pupils enjoy working and playing together and show respect for cultures different from their own. Pupils report that incidents of racist name-calling are rare.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is usually good, and sometimes exemplary. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils sometimes lose concentration in lessons because they have been sitting and listening for too long.
- The school's behaviour policy is understood by pupils and they enjoy the rewards they get for behaving well, for example 'golden time' where they get to choose their own activities. Pupils enjoy the responsibility they are given as members of the school council and the Eco council to help improve the school environment.
- Pupils know about verbal, physical and cyber-bullying. They can speak confidently about how to keep themselves safe outside of school and greatly enjoyed the talk given by London Transport about keeping themselves safe on public transport.
- The school has been very successful in improving the behaviour of pupils who were finding school difficult, by working effectively with parents and carers, and, when appropriate, with outside professionals. As a result, exclusion rates are low and there have been no exclusions this year.
- Attendance has improved and is now average. The school has been successful in reducing the proportion of pupils who are too often absent from school.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher leads the school with vision and determination. Together with the leadership team and governing body, she has ensured a consistent approach in all aspects of school improvement. Priorities identified by the school have a strong focus on raising pupils' attainment, and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths as well as aspects which need to further improve.
- Senior leaders, teachers and their support staff have received good training opportunities to help them in roles, including working closely with colleagues across the federation. As a result, the leadership of the school is now much stronger than at the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view about the quality of teaching and do not back away from giving difficult messages where this is necessary to improve classroom practice and drive improvement. They have high expectations of both staff and pupils, and set ambitious targets to raise pupils' achievement.

- Pupils' progress is rigorously checked and pupils who are in danger of falling behind are quickly identified. There are clear systems in place to monitor the impact of any extra help which is given to pupils. As a result, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those who are eligible for pupil premium funding, are now making better progress. This demonstrates the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and in tackling the causes of potential discrimination.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is well planned because it is securely focused on promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. It engages pupils because it reflects their interests and experiences, and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are provided with a range of experiences which enrich their learning, including weekly swimming lessons, specialist teaching in music and physical education, visits and weekly clubs.
- The breakfast and after-school club provides all those pupils who attend a safe and supportive environment, and a good range of stimulating activities.
- Links with parents and carers are continuing to strengthen. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, including fathers and grandfathers who were visiting the school as part of the 'Dads and Grandads' day, spoke positively about the education the school provides for their child and said that senior leaders respond well to any concerns they raise. As one parent said, 'I wish I was little again so I could come here.'
- The local authority has provided good support for the school since the previous inspection. The school is no longer reliant on external support to drive improvements because the school's leadership is now good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is actively involved in planning for the future with senior leaders, and in holding them to account for the quality of education. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's performance, including when compared to other schools, and of the quality of teaching. This is because they monitor the school's actions through visits and meetings, and have the skills and knowledge to hold senior leaders to account. They know how pay is related to teachers' performance and how the pupil premium funding is being used to improve the achievement of eligible pupils. They make sure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements, and monitor the arrangements alongside the executive headteacher to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Governors hold regular meetings to gather parents' and carers' views and have recently carried out a consultation about how the school grounds can be improved.

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	101525
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	408877

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	517
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Jhally
Headteacher	Sylvia Libsen
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2012
Telephone number	020 8965 5977
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