

Arnhem Wharf Primary School

1 Arnhem Place, Westferry Road, Isle of Dogs, E14 3RP

Inspection dates 19–20 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- All groups of pupils achieve well and make consistently good progress given their starting points. Most reach at least national standards in English and mathematics by the time they reach Year 6.
- Teaching is consistently good because teachers know their children well and plan work which closely matches their needs. If a pupil is doing less well, timely additional support is given to enable them to catch up.
- The excellent care shown to the pupils and the passion the school has that no one will fail ensure that pupils are happy in school and they behave and learn well.
- The extra government funding for pupils who are eligible for free school meals is used very effectively enabling them to reach standards in English and mathematics that are the same as other pupils.
- The staff are totally committed to the school and fully behind the leadership. They highly value the excellent support they receive to improve their teaching.
- The pupils enjoy excellent relationships with each other and their teachers. As a result pupils respect each other's differences and contribute to a strong sense of community.
- Governors understand the school well, challenge effectively and are fully involved in making plans for the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Some leaders do not have the experience or the skills to hold teachers to account and bring about more rapid improvements in teaching.
- In some lessons pupils do not get to work on their own quickly enough because the teacher spends too long talking to the whole class. This stops some pupils making more rapid progress.
- Many pupils' calculation skills are not sharp enough which slows them down when performing written calculations and solving problems.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, of which ten were joint observations with the headteacher and senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons. They also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings were held with the governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 guided inspectors around the school. The inspectors also listened to and spoke to pupils about their reading. A meeting was held with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 87 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers on the school gate. Inspectors reviewed 86 questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own information relating to pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plan, planning documentation, the school's records on the checks made on teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, policy documents and documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also looked at the school's website.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Evelyn Riley	Additional Inspector
Stephen Fletcher	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Two thirds of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after). This is well above average.
- Nearly all the pupils belong to minority ethnic groups. Nearly six out of every 10 pupils are from Bangladeshi families. One in nine pupils are from Black African backgrounds.
- Three quarters of pupils do not have English as their first language which is well above average.
- A much higher proportion of pupils join the school at times other than at the start of a key stage or at the start of a school year than is found nationally.
- One in 10 pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are supported on school action and one in seven on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. This is above average.
- A small number of pupils have dual registration with a local school for boys with behaviour and emotional needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection the school has had a high staff turnover with some inexperienced teachers joining the school. Four teachers new to the profession were appointed in September 2012.
- The school is becoming three forms of entry which has required extensive building work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - making sure that in all lessons pupils get to work on their own more quickly
 - developing a larger group of leaders who have the ability to check on the quality of teaching and hold teachers to account
 - sharing the outstanding practice in the school more regularly to develop the skills of good teachers so that a greater proportion of pupils make rapid progress.
- Develop pupils' ability to calculate more quickly by:
 - making sure that pupils can recall basic calculation facts quickly
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their calculation skills
 - providing training for teachers in how pupils learn to calculate so that they can more effectively plan what the pupils need to do next
 - improving pupils' presentation so that calculations are set out clearly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school in Nursery, Reception and most other year groups with skills and knowledge well below typical levels for their age. Many speak very little English and a large number have particular learning needs. However, regardless of their starting points most reach standards in English and mathematics that are broadly average.
- Progress is tracked carefully and pupils who are falling behind are identified and given additional support to catch up. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because the extra support is very closely matched to their needs. Additional adults make a significant contribution to pupils making good progress.
- All pupils, particularly the large proportion of Bangladeshi and Black African pupils, benefit from the strong emphasis on developing speaking skills. This builds pupils' vocabulary and helps them when they read and write. The use of partner talk gives frequent opportunities for pupils to communicate their thoughts and ideas.
- Pupils who join the school other than at normal times make good progress because the school quickly helps them to settle, finds out their interests and abilities and plans programmes of work that are appropriate to enable them to learn well.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. There is a good programme in place to enable pupils to learn their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) quickly. Pupils enjoy reading and many make rapid progress.
- Good progress is made by pupils in their writing and mathematics but many are slow performing mental calculations. This is because not enough time is given to learning and practising basic number facts and so pupils do not recall them quickly enough. This slows them down when they solve problems and do written calculations.
- Pupils who are eligible for extra government funding through the pupil premium make good and often rapid progress to enable them to attain as well as other pupils in English and mathematics. This is due to excellent one-to-one and small-group support, the use of school/home support workers and wider team working with families and make sure these pupils attend well and well-trained English and mathematics teachers working with pupils on specialised programmes. This shows the school is successful in promoting equality of opportunity for learning.
- A small number of pupils with behavioural and emotional needs attend alternative provision on a part-time basis. They receive good support enabling them to manage their behaviour better, attend well and make good progress as a result.

The quality of teaching is good

- All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between the teacher and the pupils. This ensures they listen well to the teacher and each other, there is little time wasted settling down or moving between different parts of the lessons and they can learn well from each other when they are set work to do.
- Teachers give clear indicators of what is expected in lessons and feedback in their marking of how successful pupils have been. The pupils therefore have a good understanding of how well they are doing.
- The teaching of mathematics is good and lots of interesting activities are planned for the children. However, some teachers do not have enough understanding of how pupils learn to calculate. In some classes, pupils' books show a lack of precision in drawing diagrams and in writing figures and calculations.
- Provision for learning in Nursery and Reception is very strong both inside the classroom and outside. Adults have an excellent understanding of children's interests and use these to provide relevant and interesting activities. Adults are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and engage well

with the children who listen and participate in all activities and learn well.

- Teachers' planning is based on a good understanding of what the pupils know and understand. As a result pupils are able to work well on their own while adults teach particular pupils or groups. In some lessons the pace of learning slows when teachers talk for too long and do not get pupils working independently or in groups quickly enough.
- A lot of the school's work has been focused on making sure that all teaching is at least good. This has proved effective but not enough time has been spent developing teaching that will result in pupils' achievement being outstanding. As a result there is too little outstanding teaching and strengths are not yet shared widely enough to move good teaching to outstanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school ensures that children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception classes, helping them to acquire the right attitudes to learning by developing an understanding of each child's needs.
- The school welcomes pupils who have had difficulties in other schools. They are highly successful in improving their behaviour so they are happy and learn well. The school's investment in learning mentors and consistent approaches to managing behaviour, which are understood by everyone, ensure that there is little or no disruption to the learning of others. Pupils have a positive acceptance of pupils with behavioural and emotional problems: 'Some children need more help and it isn't their fault.'
- The school shows a high standard of care to all pupils and treats them with great respect. Pupils respond by showing care and consideration to each other, behaving well both in class and around school and contributing to a strong community ethos. They are happy, feel safe, are courteous and welcoming to visitors and are proud to talk about their school and their work. They enjoy taking responsibility including being on the school council or just being a friend to a younger child who may be feeling unhappy.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and they develop an excellent understanding of right and wrong. The few bullying and racist incidents are well managed. Pupils respect each other's differences. Parents and carers are happy about how well the school looks after their children and how well they are behaved.
- While pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour around the school are generally good, adults have to work hard in managing it and so behaviour is not outstanding.
- Attendance is above average and has been improving over a number of years due to the excellent work the school has done in convincing parents and carers of the importance of good attendance. Usually pupils are punctual for school although the school is working to improve it still further.

The leadership and management are good

- The passion and drive of the headteacher and her deputy is shared by leaders at all levels who are totally motivated to provide the very best they can for all the pupils. 'The leadership is intelligent, supportive and inspirational... committed to providing children with the skills they need in the future' was one of several very positive comments received by inspectors from staff. Plans for the future are well formulated because the school evaluates its performance regularly and accurately.
- School leaders have managed well the difficulties created by the high number of teachers that have joined or left the school and also the disruptions caused by the extensive building programme. Leaders, including those who are not teachers, have ensured that standards have been maintained and are rising.
- The school engages well with its families, especially those in most need. Parents and carers are

positive about the leadership of the school and value the opportunities to attend workshops to learn how to help their children or just to give them advice and support such as in a workshop on cancer awareness.

- Senior leaders check on the quality of teaching regularly and set targets for improvement which are always followed up. As a result teaching is consistently good, even by teachers who are new to the profession. However, there are several middle leaders who are new in their roles and inexperienced in holding teachers to account. The school realises the need to develop these leaders if the standard of teaching is to be maintained and improved as the school grows in size.
- The school's curriculum is successful in promoting all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development so they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. The focus on the arts and cultural development makes a significant contribution to raising pupils' aspirations.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet legal requirements.
- The school values the local authority's good support in giving it an external view as to how well it is doing and in working with leaders in building their leadership abilities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very effective. Governors know how well the school is doing and how it compares to others. They challenge the school appropriately and support it in formulating plans for the future. They understand the link between the checks on teachers' performance and teachers' pay and how good teachers are being rewarded. Governors receive regular information about pupils' progress and are aware of where the strengths in teaching lie. The effective distribution of financial resources is having a very positive impact on the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium. Governors realise the importance of good training and ensure individuals are skilled in performing their roles effectively. The governing body gives good support for safeguarding and the appointment of staff.

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	130352
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	412271

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	567
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alesha De-Freitas
Headteacher	Sara Haynes
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 March 2010
Telephone number	020 7515 4310
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