

Snowsfields Primary School

Kirby Grove Bermondsey, London, SE1 3TD

Inspection dates 3–4 July 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 make good progress and achieve well. From low starting points, by the end of Year 6, they have caught up with most 11-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and increasingly outstanding. In the majority of lessons, teachers set suitably demanding activities and pupils receive good written and verbal advice on how to improve further.
- Pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well. Their needs are very well understood and skilled support is put in place.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and respect for each other are good. They are very proud of their school and play an active part in contributing to the purposeful, positive atmosphere.
- School leaders share a common determination to ensure that the school continues to improve. Leaders have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and this has led to improved achievement, raising the standards of reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are well taught. They make good progress because teachers and adults place a strong emphasis on developing their independence and enjoyment of learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length or develop the quality of their handwriting, so that they reach the higher levels.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' spellings or their responses when mistakes are highlighted.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, six jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, they made a number of short visits to observe support and small-group sessions for pupils at risk of falling behind.
- Inspectors spent time in all of the classes, including the specialist resource base for pupils with autism, known as the Rainbow class.
- Inspectors attended a school assembly and visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and met with two different groups of pupils. They spoke with two school governors and a representative of the local authority. They also spoke to school staff, including senior and subject leaders.
- Inspectors noted the views of 12 parents and carers who responded to the on-line Parent View survey and spoke to parents and carers who were bringing their children to school.
- The inspection team reviewed the responses to staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on the school's effectiveness, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lily Evans

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than most primary schools and contains a centre for pupils with autism which currently takes up to 14 children. This is known as the Rainbow class.
- The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special education needs at school action is well below the national average, but the proportion supported at school action or with a statement is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces, is also well above average.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs on site are managed by the governing body.
- 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?

- Improve standards in writing, especially lower down in the school by:
 - making sure that there are more opportunities for pupils to write at length and extend their use of grammar and sentence structures
 - making sure that all teachers are rigorous when checking spellings and pupils' responses and allowing more time for the development of their handwriting.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress through the school and by the end of Year 6 are reaching standards which are edging ahead of those of most 11-year-olds. School information and current work inspected indicate that pupils are on track to improve further in both key stages in 2013.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve well across the school. Overall, pupils eligible for the pupil premium were behind their peers in school in English by a term and a half and in mathematics by less than half a term. They were in line with their peers nationally in English and ahead in mathematics. The gaps have closed considerably for current Year 6 pupils because the extra funding is used effectively to provide targeted one-to-one support and to maintain four groups for homework club, which has helped them to improve and is popular among the pupils.
- Pupils' standard of reading has risen over recent years and reading partners from local businesses have helped to boost their enjoyment, so that by the time they reach Year 6 they reach above average levels. Less able pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 show a secure grasp of the principles of reading, and the school was particularly successful in the annual phonic screening check.
- Although writing standards have improved, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length, practise their handwriting or develop grammar and sentence structure as they move into key stage one. This limits their capacity to reach the highest levels in their work.
- In numeracy, pupils learn to apply their skills well when studying different topics. This enables them to further develop their problem solving and investigation skills which in turn contribute to raising their achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good quality support and achieve well as a result. Additional funding to provide specialised adult support for smaller groups daily has been highly effective in promoting these pupils' success. Pupils in Rainbow class make similar good progress to that of other pupils with special education needs in the school. The school provides particularly well for their communication skills and their achievement in reading and writing is ahead of national standards for similar pupils.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups is similar to that of other pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because the school identifies their language needs early on, and provides good support from teaching assistants who speak several different languages.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching over time has enabled pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Teaching is increasingly outstanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely and plan together well, carefully taking account of what pupils already know, understand and can do. This ensures that activities are suitably demanding for most pupils, engage their interest and motivate them well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive high-quality support from teachers and specialist teaching assistants at the right level for them within lessons and in one-to-one or small-group activities. Their progress is carefully checked.
- Teachers are very effective in linking activities with learning targets so that pupils understand exactly what is expected of them and how they can achieve greater success. Pupils understand their targets for different subjects and frequently check them when reviewing a piece of work. They have high motivation to achieve their best.
- Children begin to develop their reading and writing skills well across subjects from the time they enter the school in the Nursery and Reception classes. This close attention to speech and language helps them to overcome early barriers to learning and make good progress.

- In numeracy, teachers create good opportunities for pupils to find their own methods to solve problems and make helpful links with topics. Calculating surface areas of 3D shapes, Year 5 pupils could refer to the shapes of pyramids and some even raised the question of the Shard and its design, wondering if they could use their knowledge to calculate its own surface area.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils know exactly what is expected of them. They are happy with the amount and the level of their homework and see how it helps them to continue to achieve their very best and consolidate what they have learned. They greatly value the regular weekly homework club.
- Marking is good in most lessons and subjects and teachers encourage pupils to respond to marking comments and correct work in green pen. This shows teachers how well they understand. Nevertheless, teachers do not always correct spelling errors or check that pupils have made accurate responses and this can limit pupils' understanding and precision in their writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Parents, carers and staff who expressed an opinion agreed that behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils are polite and generally well behaved, respond well in class, especially when teaching is good or better, and show positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are proud of their school; they treat each other with mutual respect and are tolerant of each other's differences.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently well across the school and, added to the high regard which they show for pupils, this has contributed directly to the calm and positive atmosphere in the school. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils do not always manage their own behaviour to a high enough standard without the need for adult intervention.
- There are few instances of bullying, and these are dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils understand risk and know about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe on the internet. Most try to use the school's 'high 5' strategy to resolve their own conflicts, before turning to an adult for help. There are few racist incidents and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibilities as school and Eco councillors. Digital leaders help others with ICT computing problems and also support during an online lunchtime club, and playground buddies support younger pupils.
- Attendance has improved and is consistently above average because the school has been active in maintaining the high profile of attendance and informing families of the important link between attendance and achievement. The school uses the services of other professionals to tackle unauthorised absence and strengthen contact with families who struggle to ensure their children attend regularly. The breakfast club, run by the learning mentors, has had a positive impact on attendance and punctuality to school.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. If they have any concerns, they say that there are several adults who they can turn to for help and specific lunchtime clubs provide excellent care and support.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and school leaders have successfully continued to improve the climate in school to one where pupils are keen and determined to succeed. School leaders have been successful in raising standards of reading, writing and mathematics across the school because leadership roles have evolved and strengthened. Staff are unanimously positive and praising of the leadership team.
- School leaders have improved the provision within the autism unit and every pupil has a very specific programme to support his or her learning needs. This helps pupils to settle in and quickly gain maximum benefit from the good provision.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work regularly and has developed good systems to track

and monitor pupils' progress. Leaders act quickly to address any gaps and make sure that the pace of progress is not hampered. Plans to raise standards are linked directly to the checking of teaching and learning and pupils' progress.

- Leaders make sure that the way they check on teachers' and teaching assistants' performance links directly to whole-school priorities, the impact on pupils' progress and, in turn, staff salaries. This has raised the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Pupils are taught a broad and interesting range of subjects and topics. This is supported by a large number of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Special events and trips, such as the Year 6 residential visit to Norfolk, provide inspiring and memorable experiences, which help to boost pupils' environmental awareness and develop good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The school has strong links with the local community, and boosts cultural knowledge further by making good use of what the capital has to offer.
- Pupils enjoy the different subjects they study and high proportions involve themselves in after-school clubs. Pupil premium funding enables those who are eligible to participate in a wide range of activities and also provides free access for them. This has helped pupils to feel more settled and be more fully included in the life of the school and has secured their good progress.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted. No pupil, regardless of background or need, is denied access to anything the school has to offer.
- The local authority has supported the school well. It has contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning over time and has helped to raise the quality of the provision, especially in the autism base.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly skilled and they have developed their capacity to be more challenging of school leaders in the pursuit of raising standards. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and information on pupils' progress, and use the very latest available to make comparisons with other schools. Governors are committed to enhancing their own skills and focused training lies at the heart of their continued development. They make regular visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work and this provides them with essential insights into the daily running of the school. They also ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed, including pupil premium funding, the creation of two smaller Year 5 classes and how this impacts on pupils' achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well pupils are doing. They check that the breakfast club and autism unit are well run and that safeguarding meets 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	100811
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	400427

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Lohead
Headteacher	Kate Wooder
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2010
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