

Lea Valley Primary School

Somerford Road, Tottenham, London, N17 0PT

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- Attainment has improved at Key Stages 1 and 2 since 2012. Pupils now make good progress in all year groups, and some pupils make outstanding progress.
- Achievement in writing at Key Stage 1 declined in 2012 but has improved rapidly over the last year. Pupils have had many opportunities to practise writing in different ways.
- Achievement in reading at Key Stage 2 dipped in 2012 but has improved strongly over the last year. Boys have been encouraged to read more, and pupils have been taught in small, focused groups.
- Pupils are generally taught well, and some lessons are outstanding. Pupils and staff have positive relationships, and classrooms are stimulating places to learn.
- Pupils' books are well marked, and pupils are very clear how well they have done, and what they have to do to get better.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. They are polite, respectful and courteous to each other and to school staff.
- Pupils from different minority ethnic groups get on very well, and pupils care about each other.
- Since taking up post, the acting headteacher has brought about improvements in achievement and teaching at a fast rate. She and her team role model outstanding teaching.
- Leaders and managers have improved how they check pupils' understanding, particularly in mathematics, so that activities and tasks are now set at the right level for pupils, and as a result pupils' performance has got better.
- The governors share the acting headteacher's ambition, and understand the best ways for the school to work with its local community. As a result, relationships between parents and the school are very positive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not a sufficient amount of teaching which is outstanding.
- Teachers sometimes talk for too long, so pupils do not get enough time to complete the activities and work independently.
- Although achievement in reading has improved a lot in the last year, it is still not as good as writing. The school has started to give some pupils more chances to read with grown-ups and their classmates, but not all pupils benefit from this provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons or part lessons. Sixteen lessons were observed jointly with senior and other leaders.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, staff, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including the school’s documents on self-evaluation and safeguarding. They observed the school’s work, looked at pupils’ books and the tracking system used to monitor pupils’ progress.
- Inspectors considered eight responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View), 100 responses to the school’s parent questionnaire, and the 40 questionnaire responses completed by staff.

Inspection team

Miranda Perry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Theresa Mullane

Additional Inspector

Raminder Arora

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- A well-above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children that are looked after, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of families in the armed forces.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and English is not their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a nursery.
- Since 2010, the school has had three different headteachers.
- The current acting headteacher took up post in September 2012.
- There have been significant changes to the governing body over the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that more is outstanding by:
 - reducing the amount of time teachers talk
 - increasing the amount of time given to pupils to get on with activities and tasks
 - giving pupils more opportunities to work independently.
- Improve achievement in reading so that it is as good as achievement in writing by:
 - increasing the number of opportunities for all pupils to read and discuss books with their peers and adults
 - creating more opportunities for all pupils to enjoy reading.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The overwhelming majority of children who start Nursery are from minority ethnic groups, whose first language is not English, and have skills and understanding below the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress in Nursery, particularly in the development of their personal and social skills.
- A third of the children who start in Reception have not attended the nursery and have not benefited from a nursery setting. However, children overall make good progress from Reception to the end of Key Stage 1.
- After a dip in 2012, pupils' attainment in reading is now on track to be at the national average by the end of Year 2. Attainment in writing and mathematics is on track to be below average, but better than the school's attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2012.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is on track to be broadly in line with the national average, and higher than attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012. A higher proportion of pupils make expected and better than expected progress than the number of pupils nationally, with some pupils now making outstanding progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils' achievement in writing fell in 2012 but has improved significantly at Key Stage 1 this year. Pupils practise different writing styles, and the focus is on making their spelling, punctuation and sentence structure much more accurate.
- Some older boys are making exceptional progress in reading. This is because the school has set up a project where boys can buy a book of their choice, have 'boys only' reading boxes and reading clubs, and the boys have become much more engaged and interested in reading as a result.
- Girls in Years 3 to 6 and boys in Years 3 and 5 make outstanding progress in writing. Pupils are grouped by ability for literacy, and taught in smaller groups than their usual class size so that teaching can focus on rapidly improving the pupils' weaker skills to bring about excellent progress.
- The school has improved its analysis of how well pupils understand different areas of knowledge in mathematics, so work can be set at the right level which brings about good progress for all year groups.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups, and for whom English is not their first language, make good progress. Over two thirds of pupils arrive at the school speaking no English. The school determines their level of knowledge and skills extremely accurately and puts strategies into place so pupils access lessons in English very quickly.
- The school measures the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs regularly and thoroughly. As a result, it can identify quickly if pupils are at risk of underachievement and take action to ensure that they make good progress.
- The school has been very effective in reducing the attainment gap for pupils eligible for free school meals. School data indicate that in 2012, the attainment of these pupils in Year 6 was equal to that of other pupils in the school in English and mathematics. The attainment of free school meals pupils in mathematics was above that of similar pupils nationally. Their current attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good, and similar to their peers. Good use is made of the extra pupil premium funds. For example, the school employs skilled staff to work with small groups of pupils if they are beginning to fall behind with their reading, writing or mathematics, so that these pupils improve quickly.
- Pupils' reading has improved this year, particularly at Key Stage 2. Some pupils' reading is now as good as their writing, if not better, although this is not the case for all pupils. The school's programme of giving pupils more opportunities to read and discuss books with adults and each other, so that they enjoy and celebrate reading, has not been rolled out to all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best lessons, teachers listen to and question pupils carefully, so tasks and activities match what pupils know and understand, and provide challenge. For example, in an outstanding Key Stage 2 English lesson, the teacher listened to pupils saying their plurals out loud. The teacher identified which pupils were finding it hard, got their classmates to correct their mistakes, and all pupils very quickly learnt a new way to make plurals.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how well they have done, what their targets are, and how to reach them. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson pupils drew up their own targets for writing a script, based on what marking told them about their strengths and weaknesses. One pupil said, 'Miss says it's now or never for getting my tenses right, and I've decided it's now.'
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Lessons focus on developing the personal, social and literacy skills children need to begin learning well as quickly as possible.
- The teaching of writing at Key Stage 1 has improved. Teachers model exemplary writing, so pupils are confident writers. In a Year 2 lesson, a pupil explained that they were compiling a poetry anthology for Year 1 pupils, because they were brilliant at writing poetry.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well. This is because staff are skilled at understanding obstacles the pupils might have to making progress, and additional adults are deployed so they get good support in lessons.
- Mathematics teaching has improved. Lessons are planned thoroughly in response to what pupils already know, and what their weaknesses are. Teachers have strong mathematics subject knowledge, and inspire pupils with their enthusiasm for the subject.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils learn letters and sounds in a clear and structured way which enables them to make good progress across the key stage. Teachers have a detailed knowledge of which tasks and activities work best to bring about improvements in reading for pupils for whom English is a second language.
- Over the last year, the school has improved the displays and materials in the classroom, so they support learning well. Pupils are excited by their own work on display, and find materials such as lists of words to join their sentences together, and descriptions of what they have to do to reach the next level, very helpful. 'If I get stuck,' one Key Stage 1 pupil said, 'the teacher has always put up something to help me.'
- Corners of classrooms have been developed to be stimulating places where pupils can select and read books. Pupils are beginning to read more for pleasure, which has helped to bring about improvements in reading. However, some opportunities for all pupils to read, discuss their book choices, explain what they have read, and enjoy reading, are missed in some classes.
- Teachers give pupils lots of strategies to help them learn. Sometimes, teachers take too long explaining how to do things, so pupils do not get enough time to work on their own and make as much progress as they could with an activity.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well both inside and outside the classrooms. They are proud of their school and really enjoy all it has to offer.
- Attendance has improved and is now average compared to the national picture. The school works in partnership with parents to make it clear how good attendance is linked to good achievement.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. When teaching does not fully engage them, interest can wane and chatter grows but pupils report that this rarely happens.
- Pupils say that bullying of any kind is rare and when it does happen it is dealt with quickly by adults in the school.

- Parents say their children feel safe in the school and their children agree. Pupils know what situations might cause them harm and know how to handle or avoid them. They are generally aware of potential dangers when using the internet and understand issues regarding e-safety.
- Pupils' good behaviour, their respect for other cultures and religions, and their equal care for those who may need more help clearly show how well the school caters for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils can be a 'play pal' in the playground, and the role is highly sought after, because pupils want to care for each other. A 'play pal' came up to an inspector and said, 'If you are shy about playing, I am the person to help you.'

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher has the whole-hearted support of the staff with regard to her high expectations and ambition for the school.
- Since the arrival of the acting headteacher, there have been strong improvements in teaching and achievement. The leadership team regularly analyses the weaknesses in teaching and learning, and adapts the school's training programme accordingly so weaknesses are quickly addressed.
- The leadership team, models and coaches staff in the best teaching practice. The local authority has been instrumental in supporting the leadership team to make sure this best practice has been adopted by staff, through joint observation of lessons and measuring of progress. Additionally, leaders and managers have worked with the local authority to share their outstanding teaching with other schools.
- Teachers are clear that their responsibility is for the progress of all pupils. They know pupils must do well in their class, to achieve highly at the next level.
- Whole-school planning consists of short-, medium- and long-term priorities. The leadership team regularly monitors whether the priorities have been met, and re-sets them accordingly, to try and bring about as rapid improvement as possible.
- Leaders and managers provide equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination of any kind. The school community is harmonious and the good achievement of the pupils is proof of their success.
- In the past, parents have not felt well communicated with. Now they are extraordinarily supportive of the school; they feel that the school acts very quickly if they have any concerns, and prepares their children well for when they leave.
- Leaders and managers have developed an effective literacy policy which has successfully addressed underperformance in writing at Key Stage 1 and reading at Key Stage 2. The school plans to revise this policy so that opportunities are available for pupils to improve their achievement still further, particularly in reading.
- The curriculum is broad and exciting, and responsive to the pupils' needs, given the community they live in. The school has its own allotment because most pupils do not have a garden. In a Nursery lesson, pupils dug up potatoes, cooked them, and ate them for their picnic. During the inspection, junior sports day took place and the pupils loved it. One pupil said, 'We were all together, friends, my mum and granddad, my teachers, every one. It was the best.'
- The governance of the school:
 - Despite recent instability, governors have been kept well informed and support school leaders effectively while holding them to account. They help the school understand the community it serves, and appreciate the quality of teaching required for pupils to reach their potential. They question the headteacher about how good teachers are rewarded and how any underperformance is quickly tackled. They use the data well to monitor pupils' academic achievement regularly. They are fully aware of the principles behind the pupil premium and check its impact on pupils' progress. They are involved with school leaders in the

management of the performance of all staff. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

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	102125
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	412283

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	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samuel Arbuah
Headteacher	Maria Kokotsis
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 June 2009
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