

Berger Primary School

Anderson Road, Hackney, E9 6HB

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This school requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Teaching is not yet consistently good across the school with the result that pupils' achievement is not yet good.
- Standards are not high enough in English and mathematics and there are too many inconsistencies in pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 and parts of Key Stage 2 especially in reading.
- Teachers do not always provide activities that challenge pupils to extend and deepen their learning or meet their developmental needs.
- Where teaching fails to engage pupils fully, behaviour becomes restless with poor attitudes to learning.
- The school self-evaluation is not accurate in its judgements.

The school has the following strengths:

- The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher are a strong team and have a clear vision for raising standards and school improvement.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is a strong curriculum with a clear emphasis on social, moral, emotional and cultural education.
- Pupils and parents and carers are very happy with the school.
- Governors are well informed and provide a good balance of support and challenge. They regularly check on how well the school is doing in helping pupils to make better progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons or part lessons; several were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher and visits made to each class with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with a representative of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentary evidence, including the school's tracking of pupils' progress, pupils' work, and documents relating to safeguarding and special educational needs and the school's view of its own performance.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class, at break times and at other times around the school.
- Inspectors attended assemblies.
- The views of 10 parents and carers, as recorded on Parent View (Ofsted's online survey), were considered and discussions took place with parents and carers in the playground.

Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Philip Mann	Additional Inspector
Michael Jude	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average size primary school.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2013.
- The school meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than average.
- The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than the national average. This is the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals,

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in English and mathematics to good and better, by ensuring that:
 - learning activities are well matched to pupils' abilities and there is better understanding of pupils' developmental needs, especially for the more able pupils
 - the quality of reading and comprehension is improved across the school, so that it is more in line with the recent better progress seen in writing and mathematics
 - behaviour is managed consistently well
 - the good practice in teaching that already exists in the school is shared, so that teachers can learn from each other.
- Improve the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation to be more in line with the current picture of the school's performance.

Improve the effectiveness of additional adults in the classrooms by ensuring training opportunities are given to enhance their performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- For the past few years pupils' attainment has been below pupils' nationally. It has slowly improved year on year and has reached age-related expectations in mathematics and writing in Key Stage 2, but standards in reading in 2012 were still below the standards in other schools nationally.
- Not enough pupils make consistently good progress because class teachers do not regularly use information about pupils' progress to plan lessons, especially for the more able pupils. In these classes, attitudes to learning worsen and pupils become restless.
- Few pupils make more than the expected level of progress. As a result, the proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6 are below average. Some of the more-able pupils are not being challenged sufficiently and are not, therefore, reaching the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Children enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in English and mathematics. Children make excellent progress and leave the Reception classes with good levels of achievement, commensurate with those typically expected for their age and stage of development. This is beginning to impact on the pupils in Key Stage 1, where attainment is improving.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is slow, but maintains standards that are broadly average. Improvements can be seen in pupils' books and assessments show that progress is better 2013 than in the past, although more needs to be done to accelerate progress.
- Progress in reading remains below age-related expectations. In part, this was due to a small group of Key Stage 2 pupils in the 2012 tests not attaining their expected levels. Most pupils in this year group had low starting points when they entered Year 3. This year, pupils in Year 1 reached above average results in their phonics screening check. However, many more pupils are capable of making better progress.
- Progress in writing improved in 2012, and in 2013 progress also improved in mathematics. The evidence seen shows that pupils' progress in mathematics and writing has improved in recent years and is now broadly in line with age-related expectations and rising. This was due to new initiatives to improve writing and mathematics by increasing teachers' knowledge and adopting a specialised programme. One-to-one tuition, an Easter school and taking up places offered to the local authority Saturday school have also helped to improve standards.
- The extra funding (pupil premium) used to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is used by the school to provide wide-ranging activities both in school and after school. The progress of these pupils is variable across the school. In some classes, they achieve better than their classmates and in others less well. By the end of Year 6, they have made better progress than their classmates.
- High levels of focused adult support are offered to pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs with the result that they make better progress than their classmates. Pupils who have English as an additional language also make better progress than their classmates. This is due to the well focused support groups offered by the school. However, standards remain lower than pupils' nationally but are rising rapidly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching throughout the school. In some lessons, teachers are not making the work demanding enough, because they have not carefully assessed what pupils already know before planning work. In other lessons, teachers have not taken account of the developmental stage that the pupils are at, so work set is beyond them for this time of the year.
- A marking policy has been implemented across the school. Books show this is implemented

consistently well. There are clear statements to pupils about how they can improve their work, and time is given for them to assess their own, and each other's, work. Handwriting has recently improved and is a whole-school focus. This is having an impact on the presentation of work seen in books across the school. The Reception class teachers ensure that letters are formed correctly, making a good start to pupils' learning journeys.

- The ability of teaching assistants is inconsistent and varies across the school. In some classes, the support offered is with a good will but lacking in subject knowledge. In these cases, pupils are not moving forward as fast as they should. In other classes, they offer good support and pupils make rapid progress. Outside the classroom, group work showed pupils making good progress because the teachers and teaching assistants were clear about what to do and how to do it.
- In the best lessons, adults are deployed well and support groups of children with success. Teachers and teaching assistants listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning. In these lessons, pupils are attentive and motivated to learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- In some lessons, a minority of pupils are less focused and teachers have to frequently stop the lesson to refocus them. They find it hard to listen to each other losing interest very quickly. This affects their learning and slows the pace of the lesson. In these lessons, the work does not always stimulate and engage them. Sometimes, it is pitched too low or requires skills they have not yet learnt. However, in the best lessons, pupils are highly motivated and enthusiastic about their work and achieve well.
- Discussions with pupils show they feel safe and understand different forms of bullying although they are vague about internet safety. The school has already planned to address this gap in their learning. Bullying is rare and pupils say that if it happens, staff deal with it quickly. Pupils know they can talk to an adult. The school has a sensory room which is often used to calm pupils who are finding it hard to conform.
- Parents and carers spoken to, those who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, and those who responded to the school's own questionnaire feel that their children are safe and happy at school and that standards of behaviour are good.
- Fixed-term exclusions are higher than the national picture. The school was able to explain this and the situation has improved dramatically this year.
- Behaviour in public areas of the school and on entry to assembly is good. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is strength of the school. Pupils were very attentive to the African drummer who spoke and played to them in their classrooms and at the assembly to celebrate Black History Month. Pupils are able to dance confidently in front of the school, showing great rhythm and attention to music. In classrooms, pupils were given the opportunity to sing to Swahili words of welcome.
- The level of attendance has improved year-on-year and is above average. The school has been rigorous in promoting the importance of good attendance and punctuality. A termly cinema trip is offered to the class with the highest attendance together with other individual awards. This has had a good impact.

The leadership and management

require improvement

Leadership and management require improvement because they have not brought about improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement rapidly enough.

- The self-evaluation plan is over generous. However, it was completed prior to the new headteacher taking up his post in September 2012. New procedures are planned and a new school development plan has already identified the correct areas for training. All teachers with whole-school responsibility or phase responsibility have appropriate action plans which link to

this school plan. They understand their roles and subjects well and offer coaching to teachers. This too is affecting the quality of teaching. However, the school rightly recognises the need to ensure good practice is shared more widely across the school.

- A good start at tackling underachievement has been made and all pupils are very carefully tracked to ensure they make good progress. Data are clear and well presented. Pupil progress meetings make teachers accountable for every child’s progress in their class. This has helped identify those who are struggling and early interventions are then put in place.
- A specialist PE teacher is employed and a football coach. The school funds trips to an activity centre and hopes to add to this list later in the year. The additional sporting opportunities demonstrate an effective use of the additional funding provided by the government to help children be active and improve their fitness.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers many opportunities for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Disabled children are offered swimming and horse riding sessions. Attractive photographs around the walls celebrate diversity in culture and illustrate the school’s commitment to equal opportunity for all its pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to visit Paris and visit the link French school. Educational trips include taking part in sailing at the Portland Olympic Sailing Centre.
- Safeguarding meets all statutory requirements.
- The local authority has supported the school well. Training for the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers has been reinforced by a specialist consultant with the result that it offers good provision for the children and excellent progress is made. Help has been given to moderate teachers’ end of year assessments and training given to the governing body. This is set to continue with local authority provision for new headteachers in addition to the usual termly support for all schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body knows the school well and supports the headteacher and senior leaders. There is a good understanding that attainment of the pupils is not yet at or above the national standards. Governors attend regular training. The new Ofsted framework and how to access data information have recently been on the agenda. Governors employ local authority advice when setting targets for the headteacher to improve the school. They understand how to set targets for teachers to improve their work and link improvement to pay rises. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they use Governors’ Dashboard to help assess their position against other schools both locally and nationally. Pupil premium money is well used and monitored by a governors’ committee. Finances are secure.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
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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	100218
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	4122977

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	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John I'Anson
Headteacher	Steve Gleason
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 September 2009
Telephone number	01279 437590
Fax number	01279 437590
Email address	sgleason@berger.hackney.sch.uk

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