

Chestnuts Primary School

Black Boy Lane, South Tottenham, London, N15 3AS

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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:

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because too few are yet making consistently good progress across the school.
- Teaching is not good enough to ensure all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Teachers do not always use the information they have about pupils well enough to plan work at the right level of difficulty for all groups of pupils.
- In some lessons, teachers do not check pupils' progress enough in order to modify, adapt or extend tasks.
- Teachers do not systematically use the marking systems so that pupils know how to improve their work and have time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Teachers and support staff do not always plan suitable tasks and activities for the less-able pupils.
- The school's priorities for improvement are not yet linked strongly enough to raising the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher leads a team of leaders and managers who are demonstrably improving teaching and sharing best practice across the school. As a result, many pupils are now making good progress.
- The governing body is well organised and supports and challenges the school well.
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils are extremely positive about all aspects of this welcoming and improving school.
- Pupils' have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour around the school is good. They enjoy taking responsibilities and helping each other.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 parts of lessons, with some seen jointly with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons to follow up on specific aspects of the school’s work.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, as well as with other leaders and managers, members of the governing body, pupils and representatives from the local authority and the Trust.
- The inspection team looked at the school’s website and a range of documents including the school’s self-evaluation and development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, safeguarding arrangements and work in pupils’ books. They also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day, their views expressed in the school’s own survey and those of the 108 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Jennifer Barker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Dr Samuel Ofori-Kyereh

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher has been absent for six months during the last year. Currently, she works on site, four days each week.
- In July, the school became part of a Trust with another local primary school, known as the Green Lanes Cooperative Trust.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is well above average. In this school the additional funding is provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average and a high number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action is lower than the national average.
- 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?

- Ensure that teaching across the school is at least good, resulting in consistently good progress in English and mathematics, by:
 - making sure all teachers use the information they have about pupils to plan tasks that are set at the right level of difficulty for all pupils, especially the most able
 - ensuring that marking systems are used effectively by all teachers across the school, linked to pupils' next steps for improvement, and that pupils have regular opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and correct their mistakes.
 - regularly check pupils' understanding in lessons and adjust tasks if necessary, allowing pupils to share and discuss their work with each other
 - developing the skills of teachers and support staff in adapting tasks and resources so that pupils with additional needs are able to work independently in the classroom.
- Ensure that all key priorities in the school's development planning are linked securely to improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because their progress remains to variable from year to year. Although this is improving it is not yet good.
- Children enter the school in Reception from a range of settings, usually with skills that are below expectations for their age. They make good progress in most areas of their learning, although outcomes in language and literacy and mathematics are lower than in other areas. Pupils are building on this good start in Key Stage 1 and their attainment in English and mathematics is rising at the end of Year 2, with more reaching higher levels.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are also rising and there is a trend of continuing improvement, particularly in mathematics. However, pupils' progress is variable across year groups and this lack of consistency means that achievement, although improving, is not yet good.
- Leaders and managers have focused well on improving reading across the school, through daily group reading sessions and increasing links between reading and writing. This is reflected in the improvements in Key Stage 1, particularly for the most able pupils. The development of the school library is already having an impact on pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Even younger pupils like to talk about their wider reading and books they enjoy by different authors.
- In Year 1, the national check on skills in phonics (the sounds that letters make) in 2012 showed that pupils are making good progress in reading. It is evident from listening to pupils at the early stages of learning to read, that they apply these skills well in working out unfamiliar words. Occasionally, the rapid progress they are making at this stage is hampered when books are too easy.
- Additional funding through the pupil premium is used for a range of additional support including teacher support for individual and group work. In 2012, this group of pupils were approximately two terms behind others in the school in English and a term behind in mathematics. However in 2013, the gap narrowed and these pupils were just a term behind others in English and close to others in mathematics.
- Provision for those who speak English as an additional language is of high quality. Consequently, pupils who are new to English progress quickly and develop fluent English skills. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to that of their peers. They contribute to and enrich experiences across the curriculum. As a result, the school provides well for equality of opportunity with high expectations of all pupils and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress in line with others in the school. They benefit from a range of additional programmes as well as targeted support in class. However, tasks and additional resources are not always planned well enough by teachers so that these pupils can be independent learners and their progress sometimes slows as a result.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is too variable across the school. Teachers do not always use the information they have about pupils' progress to plan tasks that challenge pupils to move to the next stage of their learning, or to check learning and adapt tasks during lessons. Occasionally, work is too easy or too hard for pupils and this limits their pace of progress.
- The marking policy is inconsistently applied across the school. Where marking is weaker, comments by teachers do not make clear what pupils must do to move to their next steps. Moreover, pupils are not allowed sufficient time to respond to their teacher's comments and correct their mistakes.
- Some teachers deploy support staff well, but in too many lessons the less able pupils are not given additional practical resources and tasks are not always broken down to small steps so that they can be independent.

- There is a good range of learning opportunities in the Reception class, with adults developing pupils' language skills well through practical activities such as role play both inside and outside, and questioning. As a result children develop good social, physical and behavioural skills.
- Where teaching is best, teachers typically question pupils well, building on prior learning and developing their skills effectively over time. For instance, in a mathematics lesson about symmetry, the teacher planned different practical activities in order to investigate symmetry across different shapes. Pupils worked well in pairs and groups throughout the lesson, using mathematical vocabulary when discussing their work and making good progress. However, across the school, there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to work together and to share their ideas.
- Teachers consistently question pupils well in lessons and pupils often ask probing questions to develop their own understanding of their work. Sometimes pupils have opportunities to take leadership roles, for instance in leading class meetings for the school council and working in groups. This supports their progress and prepares them well for the future.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They like learning, particularly reading, and have good relationships in lessons and around the school. Attendance is high, and this has been maintained over time.
- The school community is one that gives pupils many opportunities to take responsibility. For instance in assemblies, pupils choose other pupils for rewards for their work and behaviour, and younger pupils think about who helps them and how they can help others.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about their children's safety in school and that behaviour is good and bullying rare.
- Pupils talk about school life positively and are clear about rewards and sanctions in the behaviour policy. They understand different types of bullying, including name calling and racism, which they say is very rare. They trust adults and know that any concerns will be followed up.
- Pupils are clear about keeping themselves safe, for instance from cyber bullying, and younger pupils were keen to tell inspectors how they keep safe crossing roads when going on trips.
- The school has good strategies in place for improving the behaviour of those who are more challenging. Staff work well with parents, carers and families, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the leadership team are now taking effective action to improve teaching across the school. Leaders and managers at all levels are involved in checking the quality of the school's work through lesson observations, short visits to lessons around the school and regular checks of pupils' work. This is demonstrably improving teaching, although some inconsistencies remain.
- Opportunities for mentoring, coaching and sharing practice, led by senior and middle leaders, are also helping to improve teaching across the school, including for those who are newly qualified. As a result, tracking of pupils' achievement shows increasingly good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, although variations remain across the school.
- The salary progression of teachers is closely linked to pupils' progress and teachers' performance. Consequently, not all leaders and teachers are rewarded. Professional development is linked to targets for improvement, including opportunities for coaching, mentoring and sharing practice.
- The local authority is developing good support to the school by focusing on the key areas for raising achievement and ensuring there are opportunities to share and improve teaching by working with staff at the school and with other schools.
- The school development plan reflects leaders' awareness of the main priorities for development. However, the links between key priorities and improvements to teaching and learning are not yet strong enough.

- The recent development of a Trust with another local school has provided a place for partnership with parents and carers of local minority ethnic communities, as well as sharing of other resources, such as those of a speech and language therapist.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are promoted well in activities both in and outside the classroom, including the breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils have opportunities to plan and attend events and festivals, including charity work and singing for the local community. They undertake a range of leadership roles across the school, which develop their confidence. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the future.
- Sports funding is used effectively to develop a wide range of skills in collaboration with local secondary and primary schools. This provides opportunities for competition and pupils have achieved well, seen in the number of sporting awards won. Sports ambassadors are organising more games at lunchtime and these, together with after-school activities, promote healthy lifestyles well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is a strength of the school. The skills and expertise governors bring with them are aligned to their roles and responsibilities. It is well organised with committees and robust systems for supporting and challenging the school. A comprehensive training programme, including the development of a good understanding of data, is in place and governors have regular reports from the headteacher and other leaders and managers. Consequently, they have an accurate view of the school's work and are able to challenge underachievement. They ensure safeguarding requirements are met and staff appointments are linked to procedures for safer recruitment. They are up to date with legislation regarding performance management and ensure that salary progression is related closely to improving outcomes for pupils. The school's finances are secure and governors ensure that funding is spent on a range of additional resources for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium. There is a programme of regular visits to the school. However, these visits do not always link well enough to key priorities in the school improvement plan for improving teaching and the progress of different groups. The recent development of the Trust with another local primary school provides an opportunity to share resources and practice for school improvement.

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	134680
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	425562
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ali Thorburn
Headteacher	Cal Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 October 2011
Telephone number	020 8800 2362
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