

# Bell Lane Primary School

Bell Lane, Hendon, London, NW4 2AS

**Inspection dates** 7–8 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. Attainment has been rising and it is now broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers plan exciting and purposeful activities that promote a love of learning.
- Pupils with English as an additional language settle quickly as they are warmly welcomed by their classmates. They make rapid progress in learning to speak English.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous and work hard in lessons. They are proud of their school and are keen to do their best.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher has been instrumental in rapid school improvement since the previous inspection. She is well supported by other senior leaders.
- The governing body ensures that pupils feel safe and are happy to come to school.
- High-quality support and challenge from leaders has improved pupils' learning and has increased the amount of good teaching.
- Leaders use information on pupils' progress highly effectively to identify where pupils need extra help so that they can catch up with others.
- Activities such as Spanish lessons and numerous visits and clubs enrich learning and provide pupils with many memorable experiences.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- While pupils' progress in writing is mostly good, it is less consistent than in reading. This is because there are missed opportunities for pupils to write at length. The more-able are not always challenged well enough.
- Written improvement planning does not show clearly how success in meeting targets is to be measured.
- The school website is uninformative and lacks some of the required information.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which six were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, members of staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 34 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also read letters from parents and carers and talked to some at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard some pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- The inspectors analysed 31 questionnaires from staff.

## Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Matthew Klimcke

Additional Inspector

Marion Hunter

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with the largest group being Eastern European. Around 80% of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many pupils join or leave the school during the year and have limited spoken English on admission.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery and two Reception classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding given to the school for specific groups of pupils including those known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is above average
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The children's centre which shares the school site is managed by the governing body. It was inspected in February 2012.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' progress in writing is consistently good by:
  - giving all pupils more opportunities to write at length in lessons
  - ensuring the more-able are always given enough challenge in lessons.
- Sharpen written planning for school improvement by ensuring that it includes clear measures for checking whether targets have been met.
- Ensure that the school website includes all the information required by law.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school in the Nursery they have levels of development that are below those typical for their age. Most have limited spoken English. From these low starting points, pupils make good progress across the school. Although test results are sometimes adversely affected by the lower attainment of pupils who have only recently joined the school, they were the best ever in 2013. Pupils' attainment has been rising and it is now broadly average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Children quickly acquire new skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Speaking skills improve particularly rapidly because adults constantly encourage pupils to express themselves. This ensures that all children, including those with English as an additional language, quickly become confident speakers for their age.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills improve quickly. In the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2013, the school exceeded national averages. By Year 6, most pupils read confidently and carry out increasingly complex calculations in mathematics. The more-able do especially well in mathematics because they receive additional support outside lessons where they are encouraged to think like mathematicians.
- While progress in writing is usually good, it is more uneven than in reading because there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- The school successfully promotes equality by ensuring that all groups, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, do equally well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, benefiting enormously from high-quality support outside lessons.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium and others is much smaller than that found nationally. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013, eligible pupils were attaining at broadly the same levels in both English and mathematics. Leaders use the pupil premium very effectively to employ additional adults who work with small groups or individuals. This helps to close the gap quickly.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make rapid progress in improving their speaking skills. Those who arrive in school during the year are given high-quality support both in and out of lessons and, by the end of Year 6, most are working at the same levels as their classmates.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and some, especially in Year 6, is outstanding. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and make learning interesting.
- Where teaching is outstanding, work is especially practical and engaging. For example, in a Year 1 numeracy lesson, work on data handling was made purposeful because pupils were responding to a 'complaint' about how much fruit was being wasted at playtime. In a Year 6 numeracy lesson, pupils' understanding of how to read measuring scales improved very quickly because they had to measure accurately various 'magical potions'.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults work together well to check children's learning and to plan what to teach next. They focus on developing early literacy skills by giving children plentiful opportunities to speak, make marks on paper and share books. Teachers check that children with English as an additional language are fully involved in activities and take every opportunity to teach new words. For example, in the Nursery, children learn how to use words such as 'stop' and 'go' by playing with road signs.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good across the school, but there is some variation in how well writing skills improve because just occasionally the more-able are not challenged enough. Phonics are introduced systematically and the grouping of pupils by ability in Years 1 and 2 means that differing needs are met well.

- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers make good use of questioning to involve pupils in their learning and to ensure that those with English as an additional language understand new vocabulary. This ensures that their speaking skills improve rapidly.
- Well-targeted support is given to pupils who have been identified as needing extra help including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to their learning especially when working with groups outside lessons.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils are great ambassadors for the school. They behave well, enjoy lessons and work hard. Their positive attitudes towards learning help them to make good progress and raise their aspirations of what they can achieve in later life. They greatly enjoy school, making comments such as, 'We do fun things' and 'I love school.'
- Pupils happily support each other in lessons and concentrate well although behaviour is not outstanding because they sometimes become inattentive when expected to sit for too long at the start of lessons. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle into routines quickly and become increasingly independent and confident as they move into the Reception classes.
- Pupils feel safe. They are clear about how to avoid dangers, including from cyber bullying, and are confident that any worries they may have would be tackled immediately by staff.
- Most pupils attend school regularly and rates of attendance were broadly average in the last academic year which is higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The school continues to work closely with a very small number of families who fail to attend regularly enough or are late.
- The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination very effectively. Newly arrived pupils settle quickly into school. They like having 'buddies' and say that, 'We soon make lots of new friends.'
- Pupils' well-being is promoted well and they develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They enjoy physical activity and learn about healthy diets. The school is making appropriate use of the new primary sports funding (additional government funding to support the development of school sports) to access swimming lessons and to extend teachers' skills through work with sports coaches from a nearby secondary school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Good leadership and management ensure that the school continues to move forward quickly. The headteacher does not accept second best and her high expectations are shared by all staff. Some middle leaders are relatively new to role, but they are developing their skills quickly and have embraced the headteacher's ambitions for the school. Together, they are doing the right things to build on the many improvements since the previous inspection. The local authority has supported the school well over this time.
- Leaders check provision carefully and are very clear about what still needs improving, although this is not always reflected clearly in written development planning which lacks detail to show how success in meeting targets is to be measured.
- The school has a good track record for improving teaching. It provides effective support for those who are new to the profession. The monitoring of teaching is thorough. Good support helps teaching to improve and has ensured that practice is consistently strong across the school. Training in areas such as phonics has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- The school's partnership with others makes a good contribution to its success. Links with the children's centre ensure the early involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning. Parents and carers are highly positive about the school, and consider that teaching, leadership and pupils' behaviour are typically good. They are kept well informed, although the school website does not include all the required information such as how the pupil premium is being

spent.

- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' basic skills although there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in literacy lessons. It provides pupils with many memorable experiences such as a recent visit to the Golden Hinde and contributes greatly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils happily celebrate the school's cultural diversity and show great respect for the needs of others.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body supports the school well and provides the right level of challenge to leaders where needed. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and have a good understanding of how well the school is performing in comparison with others. Although many governors are relatively new to their role, they are making use of local authority training to strengthen their understanding of how to interpret data on pupils' progress and attainment so that they are less reliant on information from the headteacher. The governing body ensures that the pupil premium is used to good effect and supplement it from the school budget to ensure that needs are met well. They know how the school improves teaching and check that only good teaching is being financially rewarded. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101259
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	425520

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Hickman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elaine Wilson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27–28 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8203 3115
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