

The Leys Primary School

Leys Avenue, Dagenham, Essex, RM10 9YR

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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.

- The school has improved considerably since its last inspection.
- All pupils, whatever their different needs or abilities, make good progress. Standards have risen significantly in the last two years and are now average.
- Teaching has improved and is good. Teachers have high expectations. They know what pupils can do and what they need to learn next. Work is pitched at the right level.
- Pupils feel safe, eager to learn and behave well in lessons and at break times. They are respectful and considerate of others.
- Senior leaders have been unwavering and highly successful in their drive for improvement.
- Weaknesses are tackled robustly and all staff are given training and support to help them be more effective.
- Governance has been strengthened through the federation. Governors know the school and hold leaders accountable for how well pupils achieve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in reading, Key Stage 1 and for some White British pupils are improving but not as fast as in other areas.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching and, in a few lessons, pupils are not moved as soon as they are ready.
- Subject leaders are still improving how their subjects develop pupils' skills and interests.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes in the school and observed 16 lessons. They conducted 14 of the observations jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and scrutinised their workbooks.
- Discussions were held with pupils, senior leaders, the English and mathematics leaders, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Information about safeguarding, records of checks on teaching, the school's own analysis of pupils' progress, and a range of other information were looked at by inspectors.
- The views of 14 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the views of parents who spoke with inspectors during the inspection were considered.
- As this inspection began as a monitoring inspection, questionnaires were not circulated to staff and so their views of the school were collected during conversations held during the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Jackie Krafft, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Greg Sorrell

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- The Leys is a larger-than-average-sized primary school with a nursery.
- Approximately one third of pupils are White British, with one third being from Black African backgrounds. The remaining third represent a diverse range of other ethnic groups.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. A few are at the early stages of learning English.
- Over half of the pupils are eligible for pupil premium, which is twice the national average. All are eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs has fallen and is below average.
- More pupils join and leave at different times through the year than in most schools.
- No alternative provision is used by the school.
- Since the last section 5 inspection there have been changes of staff and the school has federated with Beam Primary. Both schools are led by the executive headteacher and have separate governing bodies. The head of school is responsible for the day-to day running of The Leys.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, particularly in reading and by the end of Key Stage 1, to above average by:
 - increasing the amount of outstanding teaching throughout the school
 - securing good, permanent teaching in Year 1
 - ensuring all teachers move pupils on in lessons as soon as they are ready for their next step
 - making sure that all White British pupils quickly reach the same standards as other pupils in the school, including by involving their families more
 - helping English and mathematics leaders to sharpen their analytical skills and improve how their subjects can develop pupils' skills and interests year on year.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Standards are rising because all pupils, including White British pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are new to the school, make good progress from their various starting points. Those who had previously fallen behind are catching up quickly and gaps in their knowledge are closing rapidly. Successful steps are taken to ensure every pupil achieves equally well and no one is left behind.
- Typically, children join the Nursery with skills lower than expected for their age. They settle quickly, are curious, sociable and make good progress. As a result, an increasing number are ready for the move from Reception to Year 1.
- Since the last inspection, standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 have improved, although not as much as by the end of Key Stage 2 where standards have risen significantly from low to average. Although they make good progress, some White British pupils have not yet caught up enough to reach average standards. The most able pupils achieve well and in 2013 a greater proportion than nationally attained the higher levels.
- Pupil premium funding is used carefully. All pupils who are eligible make the same good progress as their peers in the school. They reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are similar to all pupils nationally and, on average, are about three months behind other pupils in the school. However, in Years 4 and 5 there is no difference in the standards they reach.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are accurately identified so they are fully included in lessons and make equally good progress in their learning. The school's regular checks on their progress show that some make rapid gains in a short period of time.
- Short, daily activities and regular homework help pupils to gain a secure understanding of numbers, spelling and grammar.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught every day so pupils know the sounds that letters make, increasing the numbers who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 checks. Through regular reading activities, pupils become confident, competent readers by the time they leave the school. They are encouraged to read at home, but are not reading as widely as they should to become more skilful readers.
- Primary sports funding is used well so participation in physical activities has increased. Specialist coaches are honing pupils' skills and there are more opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection so pupils are learning more in lessons and making good progress year on year.
- Teachers understand what pupils already know and what more they need to learn to achieve well. Lessons are carefully planned and work is pitched at the right level for pupils of different abilities. Teachers check constantly how well pupils are learning in lessons and move them on as soon as they are ready. In a few lessons this is not done so well.
- Skilful questioning by adults challenges pupils to think for themselves, develop their ideas and explain their reasoning. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, on probability, the teacher constantly asked, 'Why not? Can we do that? How do you know? Prove it to me,' and struck the right balance between challenging the pupils to think and giving them the support they needed to really deepen their understanding. Pupils were thoroughly engrossed and learned a lot. However, occasionally adults offer the answers too readily.
- Outstanding teaching has not been established in all year groups and the current temporary teaching in Year 1 is less effective.

- In all lessons teachers' expectations are clear, pupils are attentive, and their behaviour is managed well so learning is not interrupted. Teaching assistants are used increasingly well to support learning, particularly in the Nursery and Reception classes. Errors in how pupils are forming letters, numbers and spelling are generally spotted and corrected.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics and English is good. Teachers encourage pupils to use the correct vocabulary and set appropriate targets to help pupils reach the next level in their learning. Detailed feedback given to pupils in lessons and in their books is very helpful so pupils understand what they have done well and what they can do better.
- Relevant, regular homework is set to improve pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. Teachers check that it has been completed and follow up with parents when it is not.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to learn. They have positive attitudes to school which contribute to their good progress in lessons. They know what is expected of their behaviour, concentrate well and respond quickly to the adults, so no learning time is lost because of inappropriate behaviour. Some pupils still rely on adults to keep them learning as well as they can.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children work well together and on their own. They confidently make choices about their activities and practise reading and writing readily when outside the classroom in the role play area. They use equipment safely and follow the class routines such as putting on aprons when using paints.
- At break and lunch times pupils are considerate of each other and play well together. They demonstrate an awareness of safety, sportsmanship and fair play when using the wide range of games equipment available. They socialise well and make sure that no one is left out. All respond with enthusiasm to how the school rewards good behaviour.
- Activities such as the recent anti-bullying week and assemblies about cyber bullying help pupils understand that bullying can take many forms. They are aware of the need to be vigilant when using the internet and know what to do if they are worried or concerned about anything. Those who spoke with inspectors are confident that bullying is rare and is dealt with quickly by the school if it occurs.
- Parents who responded to Parent View and those who spoke with inspectors say that their children are safe and behave well. The school is racially harmonious, discrimination is not accepted and pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed.
- Actions to reduce absence and lateness have been successful. Attendance is now in line with the national average and more pupils arrive at school on time in the mornings. There have been no exclusions in the past few years.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have high expectations, which they communicate consistently to all staff and pupils. Their strong leadership and clear direction have been a significant driver for improvement since the school's last inspection. Their dogged determination to raise standards, accelerate the progress pupils make and improve the quality of teaching have led to success.
- Thorough, regular checks on teaching, learning and progress are followed up quickly. If anything falls below the standards expected, swift action is taken which has helped to eradicate previous inadequate teaching.
- The forensic analysis of a range of information by senior leaders means that they know how well different groups of pupils are performing and take action if anyone falls behind. Middle leaders are still developing their ability to look at information in this level of detail. Their plans are not precise about what difference they expect action to make to pupils' progress.
- Effective arrangements are in place to manage the performance of teachers and teaching

assistants and help them improve. Carefully planned training and opportunities to share the best practice, including in the federated school, are making a difference. Teachers have specific targets linked to raising standards and decisions about their salaries are dependent on their targets being met.

- The range of subjects taught and clubs offered contributes to pupils' good behaviour and understanding of how to keep safe. Reading, writing and mathematics are developed appropriately in discrete lessons and through other subjects. Senior leaders have allocated a portion of the school's budget to enliven the curriculum so that pupils build their skills in a logical and more interesting way year on year.
 - Arrangements to ensure pupils are safe are thorough. All staff are trained, regular risk assessments are carried out and appropriate checks on the suitability of staff are made.
 - The local authority has given good support to help the school improve. The support has rightly reduced as the school's own capability to improve has grown.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has strengthened through the federation partnership. Training and the recruitment of skilled governors have sharpened the governing body's understanding of the school's performance. The governing body challenges leaders well and hold them accountable for making improvements quickly. Governors on the monitoring board have an in-depth understanding of the school's performance data and how the school compares with schools nationally. They look beyond the end of key stage information to make sure that the information they are given is accurate and improvements are being sustained throughout the school. They know how the pupil premium and sports funding are being spent and that it is making a difference. Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and how it is being improved. As well as challenging leaders, governors support their actions to tackle underperformance.
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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	101216
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	420437

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Norman
Executive Headteacher	Leigh Culyer
Headteacher	Grant Krog
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2012
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