

Avanti Court Primary School

Carlton Drive, Barkingside, IG6 1LZ

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- Pupils achieve well. Scores at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check are well above the national average.
- Teaching is good because most activities are carefully planned to meet pupils' needs and help them to make good progress.
- Leaders, manager and governors have ensured that teaching and achievement have improved so that they are good.
- Governors are well informed and understand how well the school is doing. They are prepared to challenge as well as support school leaders.
- The headteacher and his leadership team understand what needs to be done to further improve the school. They have set clear expectations for good teaching and support their staff to improve their practice. Staff and governors share this vision and ambition.
- Pupils speak positively about their school, feel safe, behave impressively well and treat adults and each other with great courtesy.
- Provision in the school for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because the most able pupils are not always asked questions that make them think deeply about topics and support rapid progress.
- There is not yet a wider leadership team trained to support the headteacher and deputy headteacher in checking on and improving the quality of teaching
- Marking of pupils' work is variable and there are too few opportunities for them to evaluate and improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers. Additional activities included short visits to classrooms to look at sessions for pupils with specific needs. In addition, there were observations during lunchtimes and a school assembly.
- A lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher, and the deputy headteacher accompanied an inspector in checking pupils' books to see how well groups of pupils are now progressing in a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and subject and school leaders. Telephone conversations were held with representatives of the local authority and the Avanti Schools Trust.
- The inspectors took account of 104 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as informal discussions with parents and carers. The views of the staff were taken into account through meetings and 16 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choice of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current as well as previous academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning documents were examined, as well as records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including the school's single central record of security checks on staff, the behaviour logs and attendance records.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clifford Walker

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This inspection is the first since the school opened in September 2012.
- The school is currently an average-sized primary school with one Year 2 and four Year 1 classes. The Avanti Schools Trust plans for the school to grow to four forms a year as it expands to include a Key Stage 2 section. The Early Years Foundation Stage currently consists of three Reception classes and a nursery that opened in January 2014.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for pupils eligible for free school meals, children in public care and those from service families) is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average. The majority of pupils are of Indian heritage with Other White as the next largest group. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is in line with the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus and with statements of special educational needs are well below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - training all adults in the classroom to ask questions that challenge pupils, especially the more able, to think deeply and explain their answers in more detail
 - marking pupils' work with more precise and concise comments that show them how to improve their work and giving pupils time to respond to the marking and correct their work.
- Improve leadership and management of teaching further by:
 - training more subject and year leaders to check on pupils' progress and hold teachers to account so that there are consistently applied systems as the school continues to grow.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join Reception with the skills that are expected of four-year-olds nationally. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics. They join Key Stage 1 at or exceeding expected levels of achievement. This is because expectations are high.
- There is a rigorous focus on phonics that is sustained during the Key Stage 1 years and much higher than average proportions of pupils met the standard in the phonics screening check last year.
- Commitment to equal opportunities is evident because progress is good, relative to the pupils' starting points, and also among disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- There is only one Year 2 class and therefore there is no trend of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in writing and mathematics that can be compared with the national average. However, school records of current progress as well as a scrutiny of pupils' books show that most pupils in Years 1 and 2 are on track to meet the ambitious targets that have been set for them.
- There is little difference in the progress made between those for whom English is an additional language or those from minority ethnic groups, and their classmates.
- The most able pupils in Year 1 are making good progress and recent school records show that increasing proportions of the most able pupils in Year 2 are now attaining high scores in reading and mathematics. Pupils' scores in writing were still being moderated at the time of the inspection but work seen in the most able pupils' books was of a high standard.
- Money from the pupil premium grant is used effectively to pay for small-group activities in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, many of these pupils are now catching up well with their classmates. Although pupils in the current Year 1 are behind their peers by about two months in reading and writing and six months in mathematics, the school has focused strategies that aim to narrow these gaps quickly. There are no Year 2 pupils currently in receipt of the grant.
- Pupils enjoy reading and receive good guidance to help improve their skills. They enjoy borrowing books to read at home and are proud of participation in the bug book club.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because strong and supportive relationships are established between all adults and pupils in the classroom so pupils are, consequently, keen to learn. Well-planned and interesting tasks offer pupils good opportunities to make progress.
- The best teaching sets a brisk pace. For example, during a Year 1 lesson, where the pupils' sequencing and observational skills were developed by drafting a report on a museum visit, different pupils were given tasks of differing complexity. These ranged from using time connectives to introduce their paragraphs to including strong adjectives and adverbs to enliven their accounts of the different exhibits seen the previous day. Adults circulated, prompting with questions that sustained and extended pupils' explanations. As a consequence, all groups of pupils made good progress. However, not all teaching questions and stretches pupils so skilfully.
- Pupils understand the accuracy of their answers because teachers mark their work regularly. However, marking is not always precise enough to help the pupils improve upon their answers. Teachers do not consistently check that pupils are subsequently responding to the marking. They do not always involve the pupils in checking their own progress towards their target levels.
- Where teaching is best, adults reshape tasks quickly if pupils are not succeeding to help them to learn at their own pace. Increasingly skilled teaching assistants give extended support to pupils who need additional help to complete tasks.
- Pupils, particularly those capable of making faster progress, are given extension tasks but these

do not always include the open-ended challenges or targeted questions that support deep and extended thinking among the most able pupils.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage skilfully blends adult-led and child-initiated activities to support confident self-expression. Adults provide a stimulating choice of indoor and outdoor activities for the children and their careful questioning draws out descriptions or calculations while the children are happily engaged in physical or creative tasks.
- Pupils enjoy applying their reading, writing and mathematical skills to well-planned home learning projects. These investigations involve pupils and their families in extended projects on topics that combine historical research, art and design, as well as the use of information technology.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) believe that their children are well taught and receive appropriate homework.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. This is because pupils work very cooperatively with each other, sharing resources and concentrating to complete tasks. The behaviour of pupils is good rather than outstanding because pupils are not always able to identify their next steps for improving their work and, as a consequence, are not always able to demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning.
- Pupils behave very well outside lessons, interacting politely with adult helpers in the dining room and playground. There is a harmonious atmosphere around the school and pupils act responsibly. The school is effective in promoting positive relationships. They share the playground areas sensibly and safely, with older pupils taking on 'playground buddy' roles to make sure that everyone is welcome to join in games and activities.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils believe that they are kept safe in school and are well looked after by the adults around them. The climate of friendship, the school's values of respect for all and the positive support from adults lead to pupils acting most considerately and respectfully towards each other and to adults.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and they say that bullying is rare. They trust adults to help them and deal effectively with any problems that might arise. Adults express strong satisfaction with the school's good management of behaviour.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy strong relationships in a secure environment and follow well-established routines in the outdoor classroom, supervised by staff well trained to cope with minor mishaps.
- Attendance is high because effective strategies are used to encourage good attendance and punctuality.
- Parents and carers overwhelmingly believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they look forward to varied activities and interesting lessons. Pupils know right from wrong and have opportunities to act as school ambassadors. They value earning recognition with bronze, silver or golden awards for good behaviour. This reinforces moral and social development well.

The leadership and management are good

- The committed headteacher and his deputy have developed a robust system for sharing lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' books. As a consequence, teachers' classroom practice has improved. Leadership and management are not outstanding because middle leaders are too new to their roles to take a full part in checking on standards of teaching and achievement.
- The performance management system ensures that only those teachers who meet required standards move up the salary scale. The headteacher does not avoid difficult conversations

about teaching performance if these are necessary.

- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good because rigorous assessment procedures are followed consistently. Children's needs and interests are well met and helpful information is given to parents and carers to help their children to learn outside school hours. Arrangements for transition from home and for teaching in the outdoor area are good. The newly opened nursery is good because constructive relationships with parents and carers are fostered and children have settled in happily.
- Provision to encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Pupils reflect on the differences between right and wrong in lively assemblies and their philosophy and ethics lessons. For example, 'We all have the same spirit in our hearts no matter what colour we are' was the pupils' spontaneous response to a role play about not rushing to judgement. Opportunities to experience yoga, music and Sanskrit lessons are well received, as are visits to cultural centres such as the Museum of Childhood. In addition to Hindu rituals, the celebrations of the festivals of different faiths extend pupils' spiritual understanding.
- Physical education classes are supplemented with stimulating activities at break times. The primary school sports funding is being used to hire Olympic athletics and rhythmic dance coaches who are training the class teachers to improve their skills. Attendance at after-school sports clubs has increased as a consequence of this initiative.
- Effective safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are scrupulously applied, with governors taking an active role in training for safer recruitment. Leaders promote equal opportunities and are assiduous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- Leaders work effectively with other schools. Shared training sessions with the Wroxham School Teaching and Learning Alliance help to improve teaching standards. Grammar school students have been enlisted to act as positive role models for pupils and students from the Jewish Secondary School will undertake their work experience here. Partnerships are being forged with outstanding schools so that teachers and teaching assistants can visit and adapt their methods.
- The local authority has provided support to this new school by moderating teachers' assessments of pupils' work and by providing training for governors. The Avanti Schools Trust also supports the leadership of teaching and learning by arranging joint observations for school leaders.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body knows the standards of achievement and teaching in the school because the headteacher's summary reports provide clear information that is subject to challenging questions in meetings. Governors also make systematic visits to the school to make sure that reported improvements are borne out. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they receive information comparing pupils' performance in the phonics screening check and achievement of early learning goals compared with national figures. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay progression and pupils' progress because they have revised the pay policy and receive summaries of teachers' performance from the headteacher. They are aware of what support has been provided to improve teaching and that there has been no underperformance. Checks are made that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups and oversight of safeguarding is scrupulous. The governing body ensures that the budget is very carefully managed and supports strategic planning by reviewing the school improvement plan.

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	137820
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	430671

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Anobah
Headteacher	James Biddulph
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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