

Dorothy Barley Infant School

Davington Road, Dagenham, RM8 2LL

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2014

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 is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Most Key Stage 1 pupils do not make good progress in writing and mathematics.
- Assessment systems used to check on pupils' progress, especially in mathematics, lack rigour.
- Teaching requires improvement. Some teachers do not regularly check pupils' understanding and do not give pupils tasks that are difficult enough, especially the most able.
- Pupils are given insufficient guidance to help them improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour in class and at the end of lunchtimes is sometimes less than good.
- Some leaders, including subject leaders, do not use assessment information rigorously to check on teaching or pupils' progress. As a result, pupils' progress requires improvement.
- Governors do not thoroughly check the accuracy of information they receive from leaders and they do not hold them accountable enough for speeding up pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is good in Nursery and Reception and children are now making good progress.
- Most pupils, including the most able, make good progress in reading.
- Leaders have thoroughly acted upon advice given at the previous inspection and improved the range of subjects and topics that pupils study.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' attendance has improved and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 18 lessons. Most of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- The team examined the school’s approaches to assessing pupils’ progress and used a sample of writing books to check the accuracy of teachers’ evaluation of written pieces with leaders.
- The inspection team examined pupils’ progress over time through books, mathematics worksheets and workbooks.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and acting deputy to discuss the progress that groups of pupils make throughout the school. They analysed the school’s information on attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with other leaders, staff and with governors. The team also met with the local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered parents’ and carers’ views of the school through informal discussions at the start of the inspection and the 37 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read and interviewed pupils.
- The team examined a number of documents, including records of the local authority’s involvement with the school, minutes of governors’ meetings and information on pupils with special educational needs. The team also looked at attendance figures.

Inspection team

Janice Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jill Thewlis

Additional Inspector

Avtar Sherri

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a very large-sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- A majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with the largest groups being from African, mixed and Asian or Asian British heritage.
- An above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A third of the children who start in the Nursery do not continue into Reception and new pupils join other year groups at different times in the year.
- Since the previous inspection, the school was federated with the adjoining junior school to provide additional support. Since Easter 2013, the deputy headteacher supported the junior school for four days per week and the head of the infant school was the head of the federation. This federation ended in February 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure teaching that is at least good, especially in Key Stage 1, by making sure that:
 - teachers check pupils' understanding more regularly and provide more difficult activities, especially for the most able
 - more effective guidance is given to pupils to help them improve the quality of their work.
- Accelerate Key Stage 1 pupils' progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that pupils are confident in using a range of punctuation
 - using assessment systems effectively to check on pupils' progress
 - giving pupils more opportunities to apply and extend their knowledge and skills.
- Strengthen leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by making sure that:
 - behaviour is managed consistently well in class and at lunchtimes
 - subject leaders use assessment information rigorously to check on teaching and pupils' progress
 - governors hold leaders fully to account for speeding up pupils' progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because Key Stage 1 pupils do not make good progress in writing and mathematics.
- Children join the Nursery and Reception with skills that are below those expected for their age in all areas of learning; some are at the early stages of learning English. In the past, progress required improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the teaching was not consistently good.
- Leaders have supported teachers and, as a result, the quality of teaching has improved and the activities now engage and sustain children's interest. The children are now making good progress in Nursery and Reception.
- Pupils often start Year 1 with attainment below their peers nationally. Over time their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics fluctuates and they make inconsistent progress. The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in the check on phonics (linking of letters and sounds) has been below average.
- Most pupils' progress in reading is stronger than in writing and mathematics, especially in Year 2. The most-able pupils read fluently, and with confidence, and have a clear understanding of what they read. A few less-able pupils struggle to get the right pronunciation and, as a result, they sometimes do not understand what they read.
- Most pupils, including the most able, do not make enough progress in writing because they are not taught effectively to use a range of punctuation. Sometimes there are insufficient checks on whether the quality of pupils' writing is improving. Consequently, some pupils make the same errors repeatedly without enough guidance to help them improve their work.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics requires improvement because the assessment systems to check their knowledge and understanding lack rigour and sometimes activities are too easy. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply or extend their knowledge and skills.
- In Year 2, most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make better progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics, but in Year 1 their progress is not as strong. This is because teaching is not good and some additional adults do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Some pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers in writing, but their progress in reading and mathematics is a bit slower. This is because some pupils join the school at different times with very little English and low levels of attainment.
- In 2012, the attainment of Year 2 pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium was less than a term behind their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. In the most recent assessments, the gap in 2013 widened slightly in writing and mathematics. This was because some pupils joined the school late with low attainment, especially in writing.
- Currently, the progress of eligible pupils is similar to their peers in Year 2.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching, especially in Key Stage 1, requires improvement because some teachers do not regularly check pupils' understanding and some pupils, especially the most able, are not given difficult enough work to do.
- Insufficient guidance is given to pupils to help them improve their work. Consequently, most pupils do not make good progress because they do not often improve their written pieces.
- In mathematics, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and extend their knowledge and skills, which slow their progress.
- There are many strengths in teaching in Nursery and Reception. Teachers and additional adults provide good guidance and ask probing questions to get children to think about their work.

Children enjoy the activities, which engage them well. For example, Nursery children chose to explore a book on asteroids because they wanted to discover more about space using the 'space rock' that they found.

- In Reception, teachers use the correct mathematical language to help children explain the concept of subtraction. The children make good progress in recording the numbers they take away and the correct answer.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because, when teaching is less than good, pupils lose engagement and their progress slows. Pupils say sometimes their learning is interrupted by some of their peers who talk while the teacher is speaking. In some lessons, pupils lose interest because the task is too easy.
- In Nursery and Reception, children's behaviour is often good because there are many activities to sustain their interest and the children receive more support from an adult because they often work in smaller groups.
- At the end of lunchtimes, some pupils' behaviour is less than good because pupils spend a bit too long queuing to go into their lessons; they sometimes do not listen well to the instructions of the additional adults.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The gates are securely locked during school hours and pupils enjoy playing in safe play areas. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and they are aware of how to keep themselves safe in and away from school. They are very knowledgeable about e-safety.
- At the time of the inspection, pupils had e-safety workshops from an external agency. They enjoyed using fairy tales to identify dangers with some unsafe practice and they were given many opportunities to think about an appropriate response to secure their safety.
- The majority of the parents and carers, who spoke to inspectors and those who responded to Parent View say that their children are safe, looked after well and there are no issues with bullying.
- The school council gives pupils responsibility. There are regular meetings and pupils' opinions are valued and acted upon. Outside of lessons, pupils are polite and respectful towards their peers and adults.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders' checks on teaching and pupils' progress lack rigour and, as a result, they do not make good progress.
- Although pupils are assessed regularly, some subject leaders do not make sure that assessment systems are rigorous. They do not use the information effectively to check thoroughly on teaching.
- Systems to manage teachers' performance are linked to pupils making at least good progress. Some leaders are unclear about the progress pupils are actually making; this means prompt action is not always taken to help those who are falling behind to catch up.
- Leaders', including governors', view of the school's effectiveness is too generous. Consequently, leaders are not thoroughly held to account for speeding up pupils' progress.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have responded to all the areas to improve. They have now ensured that pupils have a wide range of topics and subjects that they enjoy and their attendance has improved to be in line with the national average.
- Pupils' physical development is promoted well and the government's primary sports funding is used to assist in employing a sports coach who organises and operates various multi-skills sessions before and during school. These sessions have helped pupils to improve their coordination, agility, team building and communication skills. The coach also provides training

for staff so that they can improve their knowledge and skills.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is promoted well because there are many opportunities for reflection and prayer. Pupils have an awareness of other religions and assemblies promote good citizenship.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of, and empathy with, other cultures and religions because of regular visits to a mosque, temple, or gurdwara. Consequently, the school is an inclusive community where great care and support are given to pupils so that they are able to treat each other fairly, equally and with respect. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The school has worked well with the local authority to identify and work with an outstanding school to help them improve teaching in Nursery and Reception. As a result, children are now making good progress.
- The pupil premium is used to provide individual pupil support from a school based counsellor, and it also provides additional reading, writing and mathematics support for eligible pupils. The impact of this is that Year 2 pupils are now making better progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are supportive of the school and are now asking challenging questions about the quality of teaching and pupils' performance, but they have relied too much on the information given by leaders without being able to check the accuracy of the information.
- Governors have used leaders' evaluation of external data to judge pupils' progress more generously than they should, and they have not thoroughly challenged and held leaders to account for pupils making more rapid progress.
- They have checked the pupil premium to make sure that the funding is used appropriately to speed up eligible pupils' progress. Governors asked leaders to explain why some pupils in the 2013 tests did not achieve at least the expected levels. As a result, leaders are now doing more regular checks, especially on the current Year 2 pupils, to make sure they make better progress.
- Although governors get updates from the sports coach about the impact of his work with pupils and improvements to their physical development, they do not rigorously challenge leaders to evaluate the impact of the sports funding on improving staff's knowledge and skills as well.
- Governors are involved in the headteacher's performance management and get regular updates on staff performance. They attend many training events and ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and effective.

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	101188
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	431264

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael London
Headteacher	Shan Evans
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
Telephone number	02082704655
Fax number	02082704654
Email address	office.d-barley-i@bdcs.org.uk

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