

# Earlsmead Primary School

Arundel Drive, Harrow, HA2 8PW

**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Pupils do not achieve equally well across all classes and subjects and teachers do not always expect them to make good use of the literacy skills they have learned.
- Pupils are not always clear about what they have to achieve and work set is not always challenging enough, especially for the most able in mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because pupils do not always try hard enough or maintain their concentration in lessons.
- Pupils' mistakes in the use of grammar are not identified and corrected quickly enough and advice on how pupils could improve their work is inconsistent and not always followed up.
- Subject leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of how well teachers and pupils are doing in the subjects they lead and manage.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in developing their speech and language and their independence.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive well-judged support.
- Progress in reading is good across the school and younger pupils do well in learning phonics (the sounds letters make) and use this knowledge to help with their reading.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enabling pupils to become considerate and to respect others.
- The headteacher works well with the deputy and assistant headteachers, and the governors, to identify what needs to be done to make the school good and, consequently, achievement and teaching are improving more quickly than in the past.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in 18 lessons, some with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account 11 responses to the online Parent View survey and results from the school's own recent parental survey. Informal discussions were held with a sample of parents.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in survey responses from 19 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christopher Crouch

Additional Inspector

Mark Wilson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Earlsmead is much larger than the average-sized primary school and numbers are rising.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and those from service families) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is below average and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school has a high proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language, with a wide range of languages being spoken.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A number of teachers, including two senior leaders, have joined the school in the last two years.
- A significant proportion of pupils join and leave the school at times other than at the start of Reception and the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching, pupils' achievement and attitudes to learning so that they are consistently good or better, by:
  - making sure that pupils know that they always have to do their best and are always clear about what they have to achieve
  - ensuring that pupils have harder work when they are ready to move on in their learning, especially the most able in mathematics
  - making sure that all pupils make good use of the skills they have learned in literacy
  - providing consistent guidance on pupils' next steps and ensuring that pupils follow this advice quickly
  - developing better attitudes to learning so that pupils always try hard and achieve well
  - checking that pupils' mistakes in their use of grammar are identified and corrected.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they have a clearer understanding of how teachers and pupils are doing and have a positive impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement.

The planned 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, while progress is getting faster across the school, it is not yet consistent between classes and subjects in Years 1 to 6.
- Achievement in mathematics is weakest and pupils, especially the most able, are not consistently challenged. For example, in some lessons the most able complete the same work as others and, consequently, need to sit and wait for others to catch up.
- Historically, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been low, but has been rising steadily since the last inspection and is now broadly average in the most recent national assessments.
- Reading has been a whole school focus and, consequently, it is the strongest subject. Pupils in Year 1 do well in learning phonics (the sounds that letters make). Pupils enjoy reading and younger pupils make comments such as 'phonemes help me to read' and 'the sound buttons help me'.
- In writing, pupils produce some good quality work in their 'Big Write' books and have improved their spelling, but the quality of their writing is inconsistent in other books and they often make mistakes with their grammar.
- Pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language do well and they are confident about trying out the new language they have learned and make similar progress to other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children start school in the Reception Year, working below the levels typical for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning, especially in developing their independence and their speech and language. A wide range of tasks add interest and challenge. For example, one able child was encouraged to add together numbers totalling over 20 and another re-wrote the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* in his own words.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported in class and when receiving additional support.
- Pupils new to the school settle quickly because the school promotes equal opportunities and discourages discrimination of any kind. They make similar progress to other pupils at the school.
- The attainment gap for pupils entitled to the pupil premium funding is closing, although in 2013 they were half a year behind other pupils in reading and writing and a year behind in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Learning is slower than it should be because pupils are not always clear about what they have to achieve. There are also times when pupils stay at the same level for too long rather than move on to the next step, particularly in mathematics. Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children have a wide range of interesting activities which promote good learning and know they must always do their best. For example, the children made good progress as they enjoyed various activities related to the story *Little Red Riding Hood*.
- A strength in teaching across the school is the good relationships members of staff form with the pupils, enabling pupils to enjoy school and to become confident.
- Work in pupils' books is not always of good quality and does not consistently build on what they have learned previously because pupils are not always given the opportunity to use and build on the good skills they have learned in literacy.
- Marking is developing, but advice given to pupils varies and pupils are often given too little opportunity to act on advice quickly.
- Teaching assistants often provide good support for individuals and small groups of pupils, including those at risk of falling behind in their learning. At times though, teachers do not make full use of their skills when they sit and listen with the pupils rather than helping to support

learning.

- A valuable before-school homework club provides worthwhile support for selected pupils, and also enables them to arrive on time at the start of the school day. Other after school clubs promote learning and achievement across the wider curriculum.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because they do not always try their best and occasionally they come off task when the work they have been given is not engaging their interest well enough.
- The school's new behaviour policy is having a positive impact on the pupils' social behaviour and, consequently, the sanction of excluding pupils from school when they misbehave has not been needed this year. Pupils behave well at playtime, and especially enjoy the increase in sporting activities available at lunchtime. The very large majority of parents in the school's parental survey said that they are pleased with the way pupils behave.
- Pupils are polite, charming and friendly. Rates of attendance have improved dramatically with the new zero tolerance policy and are now broadly average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and they know how to stay safe. As one pupil said, 'Buddies sort things out.' The very large majority of parents agree that their children are kept safe and feel free from bullying.

### **The leadership and management**

### **require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because, while the school is improving steadily, subject leaders are relatively new to their responsibilities and do not have a clear enough picture of how well teachers and pupils are doing in the subjects they lead so that they can help to improve the school quickly.
- The rate of progress made by the school since the last inspection has been hampered by several staffing challenges. The headteacher and deputy and assistant headteachers have been in a stronger position to move the school forward over the past year and their capacity to improve the school is evident in the recent improvements made in teaching, pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to make the school good, and her vision for the school is shared with governors and other members of staff. More rigorous ways of checking up on how well teachers and their pupils are doing are helping to pinpoint where support is needed most and remaining weaknesses are being tackled robustly.
- The curriculum covers all subjects and provides a wide range of additional activities to extend pupils' experiences. For example, the new funding provided by the government to enhance sport is being used well to provide coaching, staff training and additional lunchtime activities. Pupils are keen to take part in hockey and skipping at lunchtime. These activities have already had a positive effect on developing the pupils' healthy lifestyles and physical well-being, helping them to reach the standards of which they are capable in physical education.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Thorough checks are made on those who help pupils in school, and staff training on how to care for the pupils is up to date.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well at the school. Pupils are supported especially well socially, enabling them to mix harmoniously with pupils from many backgrounds and faiths. There is a strong sense of community at the school and pupils are keen to share each other's successes and learn about various celebrations.
- The school's partnership with its parents is positive. Parents are pleased with the work of the school. They typically make comments such as 'really friendly, my daughter is comfortable here' and 'my son likes school'. The school provides training for parents so that they can help their children more at home and this is well received.

- The local authority provides the right level of support for this improving school, and support is reducing now that senior leaders are demonstrating that external help is not needed to make the school good.
- The attainment gap for pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is closing for pupils currently in the school. In national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2013, eligible pupils were over a year behind other pupils in mathematics and half a year behind in reading and writing. The gap is already smaller this year because the school is providing support that is more precisely tailored to the needs of individuals to speed up progress. For example, some pupils are given individual support in the early morning homework club.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is developing and governors are knowledgeable and keen to increase their involvement in checking for themselves how well the school is doing. They know how well data on the school compares with other schools, how the school checks up on teaching and what is being done to support weaker teaching and to reward good teaching. Governors have already planned for an external review of their work so that they can have a greater impact on its 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102219
<b>Local authority</b>	Harrow
<b>Inspection number</b>	440957

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	401
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Trudie Frith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Billington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8864 5546
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