

# Harbinger Primary School

Cahir Street, London, E14 3QP

**Inspection dates** 15–16 January 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		Good	2
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

- Achievement over time is not yet good enough in all subjects and not enough pupils achieve the higher levels at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching has been too variable across the school and across subjects, resulting in pupils' progress being uneven and too slow.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. The work set is not always challenging enough, especially for the most able learners and for those who can learn at a faster rate.
- Teachers do not consistently enhance and consolidate pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in work across the curriculum.
- Sometimes, support staff in the classroom are not deployed effectively enough in helping pupils make good progress.
- Marking in pupils' books and expectations of the quality of pupils' work are not consistently effective across all subjects.
- Leaders do not plan improvement activities in enough detail. This means that they cannot always measure success or respond quickly enough when underachievement is identified and so ensure good outcomes for all groups of pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have taken effective action to eradicate inadequate teaching across the school.
- Due to recent improvements in the quality of teaching, the vast majority of pupils are now making expected progress. An increasing proportion also make better than expected progress.
- Standards have risen since the last inspection across Key Stage 1.
- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs usually make good progress because they are well supported.
- Pupils like school and they feel safe. Most attend regularly and behave well during lessons and around the school.
- Governance is strong and governors have the appropriate expertise and experience to move the school forward.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 22 lessons or parts of lessons. Five of these were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors examined 35 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, talked to some parents and carers before school and took account of a recent school questionnaire. They also took account of the views of staff expressed in 38 questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority's advisory service, the Chair and another member of the Governing Body, and members of the school staff.
- Inspectors examined pupils' progress data and other school documentation, including the minutes of governors' meetings and safeguarding information.
- A formal discussion was held with a group of pupils. Inspectors also talked to pupils at break and lunchtimes as well as in lessons.

## Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional Inspector
Alastair McMekan	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Harbinger Primary School is larger than the average -sized primary school.
- Over half the pupils are from a Bangladeshi background, with the rest of the pupils coming from a range of minority ethnic heritages. Just over half of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A high number of pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual time.
- The school has a higher than average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- Almost two thirds of the pupils are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding given to schools for children in specific groups including those in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals. In this school the pupils eligible for the pupil premium are those known to be entitled to free school meals and those in the care of the local authority, and this proportion is well above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure all teachers provide challenging work to ensure at least good progress of all pupils and, in particular, those of the most able learners
  - ensuring that all adults in the classroom make a full contribution to pupils' learning
  - ensuring that the quality of marking and pupils' work is consistently good in all subjects.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment across the school in all subjects by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring that pupils' targets in reading, writing and mathematics are reinforced through their learning in other subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - increasing the focus on the achievement of groups of pupils and, in particular, of the most able learners when monitoring the quality of teaching
  - responding promptly and with rigour to any underachievement to ensure that progress is accelerated
  - ensuring that development plans have tight timescales with measurable indicators of what success will look like to ensure swift improvements in pupils' achievement
  - regularly monitoring the impact of any initiatives or use of additional funding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Attainment has been below national expectations for some time due, in part, to high numbers of pupils joining the school other than at the usual time.
- Achievement is not yet good because improvements in standards are too recent and there is still some inconsistency in progress across the school and classes.
- Children enter Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age, especially in language and communication. As a result of some poor teaching, children's outcomes in 2013 were below those of previous years and the typical level for their age in all areas of learning. Currently, children are showing a typical level of development for their age because teaching is now mostly good and none is inadequate.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in the past has been consistently low and not enough pupils have reached the higher levels, particularly in reading. However, since 2011, there have been improvements in writing, and mathematics is now in line with the national average. The school's own data show there is an upward trend of further improvement and especially in reading.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has also been consistently low and not enough pupils have reached the higher levels in any subject. Improvements made in 2012 were not sustained in 2013. However, the progress that Year 6 pupils made in 2013, between the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, improved and was in line with national expectations.
- The proportion of pupils that made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points was in line with the national average. This is an improvement compared with 2012. In addition, more pupils made better than expected progress than in 2012 and compared favourably with the national average. School data indicate that this improving picture will continue in the current academic year.
- The progress Bangladeshi pupils and those with English as an additional language made across Key Stage 2 in 2013 was below that of similar pupils nationally. However, school data indicates that this is not a trend across the school and the proportion making expected progress in all subjects was similar to that of others in the school.
- A focus on teaching phonics (linking letters and sounds) across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has resulted in a rise in the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the national average in the phonics screening check. Nonetheless, standards in reading in 2013 remained well below the national average at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Learning seen in lessons observed during the inspection and the school's information about pupils' progress in reading indicate that reading across the school is improving rapidly.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. This is because careful and regular checks are kept on their progress to ensure that appropriate and well delivered provision is in place to meet their individual needs.
- Pupil premium funding is used to support learning through increased staffing, speech and language support, counselling and individual and group support. In 2013, the proportion of pupils supported through this funding making expected progress matched others in school. The gap in attainment between these pupils and others in the school is closing. However, the attainment of Year 6 pupils supported by additional funding was approximately 14 months behind other pupils (their peers) in writing and eight months behind in reading. There was not a significant gap in mathematics but the gap is closing more slowly in Key Stage 1.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not good because too much teaching over time has not been good enough to accelerate the progress of all pupils and to ensure that a greater proportion reaches the higher levels in all subjects and across the school.

- There has recently been an improvement in the quality of teaching and inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Nonetheless, teachers' expectations are still not consistently high enough and, as a result, not enough pupils, especially the most able, reach the higher levels of attainment across the school.
- Reception and Nursery children have the opportunity to learn alongside each other, by engaging in work which is linked to their different stages of development. For example, in one activity designed to develop children's number skills, children had to knock down skittles. Nursery children were expected to at least count the number of skittles knocked down. However, the Reception children were expected to at least add and write the totals on the board.
- In the weaker lessons support staff are not efficiently deployed while the learning is being introduced so all pupils, especially the most able learners, were not able to move forward quickly with their learning. The tasks set by teachers are often lacking enough challenge and, in these instances, pupils make slower progress. Pupils told inspectors that the work was often too easy for them.
- In the best lessons seen, there is a brisk pace and pupils made good progress because they are enthused by the teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning very well to assess pupils' learning throughout the lesson. Teaching was swiftly adapted when pupils' learning slowed. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and are becoming confident in doing so. Learning environments are stimulating and provide good aids to learning which are used well by both teachers and pupils.
- The school's marking policy is mostly adhered to and increasingly provides pupils with effective advice and guidance on how to improve their work in literacy and numeracy. Pupils are given time to respond to teachers' comments and told inspectors that they found this very useful to help them improve their work. However, marking is less helpful in other subjects and pupils' targets for improvement in reading, writing and mathematics are not routinely reinforced across the all subjects.
- The school is a very cohesive community and its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and develop their skills in sport, music and art.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good and parents and carers, pupils and staff at the school agree. They behave well in and around the school. They are courteous and considerate and playtimes and lunchtimes are calm.
- Behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is typically good. Inspectors did not see any off task behaviour or low level disruption in lessons or around the school.
- Pupils are confident that there is very little bullying at the school. They understand about different types of bullying and, on the rare occasions that it does occur, they are confident that teachers deal with it swiftly and effectively. Pupils talked enthusiastically of the weekly opportunities for circle time, when they could discuss and often resolve any concerns in a safe and supportive environment..
- There have been no exclusions from the school for a number of years. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the school is committed to providing equal opportunities. The school is driving equality even though some pupils are not yet achieving quite as well as they could.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and a large majority of parents and carers thought that their children were happy and well looked after. Attendance has improved since the last inspection as a result of the school's more rigorous approach and is now broadly average. Punctuality is good and pupils say that this is an improvement.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and carers agree that the school keeps their children safe and pupils are overwhelmingly confident that they feel safe in school. They are well informed as to how to keep safe including road safety, the use of drugs

and e-safety.

## The leadership and management

## require improvement

- Leadership and management, including that of the Early Years Foundation Stage, are not good. This is because improvements in achievement have not been rapid enough, especially for the most able learners, and the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good enough for pupils' to learn well.
- Feedback from staff questionnaires shows that there is a shared desire to improve and support senior leaders. There is secure capacity for further improvement, demonstrated through the improvements in attendance and the improvements in pupils' reading across the school.
- The school development plan sets out an adequate agenda for improvement, but this is not done well enough to bring about rapid change. Some improvement activities are not planned in enough detail, about when and how success will be measured precisely by leaders. Plans do not identify points along the way so that leaders and governors can check that they are successfully on track. Initiatives are not always systematically checked to ensure impact on pupils' learning. For example, a plan is not in place, to show how the school will monitor the impact of the primary sports funding. Governors have not yet had a report on the impact of the pupil premium funding for 2012–13.
- Middle leaders are developing well and are growing in confidence. They are able to demonstrate that they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and can already show their impact on improved pupil progress, for example on the improvements in phonics teaching in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are accurate and regular. However, leaders do not use the information that they have about pupil underachievement as a focus for lesson observations. They also do not intervene quickly enough when underachievement is identified to ensure swift progress for these pupils.
- Teachers' performance is linked to their pay, the Teachers' Standards and the school's development plan. Leaders have ensured that training has been provided for teachers, focused on both the school's priorities and their individual needs.
- The school is working with the local authority to support the development of middle leaders and to continue to develop the teaching of phonics and reading across the school.
- An effective partnership with a local outstanding school has contributed to recent improvements in the quality of teaching. Parents and carers are very positive about the school and the school uses every opportunity to engage with them.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced so pupils have enjoyable experiences and a range of opportunities to extend their understanding of the world and the community they live in. Social and moral education is strong, which is evident in the cooperative nature of pupils' behaviour for learning. The school is using the school's sports funding to buy in qualified sports coaches. This is to extend the range of sports available for pupils to take part in and to develop teachers' skills in teaching physical education.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is knowledgeable and supportive and works closely with leaders and staff. It brings a range of relevant skills to the school. Governors are keenly ambitious to secure improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement. They know what the school does well and understand what it must do better. They are gaining in confidence in analysing information about how well pupils achieve and ask searching questions to challenge the school further.
  - Governors hold the headteacher to account through a rigorous performance management system supported by the local authority and ensure that teachers are rewarded appropriately for their work. They have link roles and increasingly they are visiting the school on a regular basis, taking part in learning walks. Consequently, they have a good understanding of where the strengths and weaknesses are in the quality of teaching.
  - Training for safer recruitment and safeguarding have been undertaken and governors ensure

that the school does all it can to keep pupils safe. They are aware that their engagement with parents and carers is not as strong as they would like it to be and have plans and actions in place to address this.

- Governors know what the pupil premium funding is used for and they check the impact of this money against the results of similar pupils nationally.

## 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>	100904
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	432174

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>	356
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Katy Bennett-Richards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mandy Boutwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 January 2014
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