

East Wickham Primary Academy

Wickham Street, Welling, Kent, DA16 3BP

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Some pupils do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Systems for collecting information on pupils' achievement are not used well to check on pupils' progress or to help staff plan suitable activities for all learners.
- Teaching requires improvement. Some teachers do not provide more challenging work for some pupils, especially the most able, so that they can further apply their knowledge and skills.
- Some teachers do not give enough feedback and advice to pupils. This limits their progress because they do not fully understand how to improve their work.
- Some teachers and additional adults do not have secure subject knowledge in mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour in some lessons is sometimes less than good.
- Leaders, including governors, do not rigorously use the available information to check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Some subject leaders do not thoroughly check on how well new approaches to developing pupils' skills are working so that they can make amendments, if necessary, to speed up pupils' progress.
- Governors do not rigorously check the accuracy of information they receive from leaders. They do not hold leaders to account for rapidly improving teaching and speeding up pupils' progress, especially for the more able.

The school has the following strengths

- There is good leadership in the Nursery and Reception classes and children make good progress. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium and those with special educational needs make similar or better progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils feel safe and secure.
- Most Key Stage 2 pupils are no longer underachieving. They are now starting to make more rapid progress.
- Leaders are now tackling weaker teaching and improving pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that there are more training opportunities for teachers, and staff now work collaboratively across the different key stages.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 30 lessons. Some of the lessons were observed jointly with the executive headteacher and the heads of the infant and junior school.
- The inspection team examined pupils' books to assess their progress over time.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the heads of the infants and junior school 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 and governors. The team also met with the Kennal Academies Trust representative.
- Inspectors considered parents' and carers' views of the school through informal discussions at the start of the inspection and the 38 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 the academy review report, minutes of governors' meetings and information on pupils with special educational needs. They also looked at attendance figures.

Inspection team

Janice Williams, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Ramesh Kapadia	Additional inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Approximately 38% of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils entitled to free school meals and a few from services families. This figure is above average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and around 45% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group is of African 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 above average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The infant school became an academy in April 2011 and later extended its age range to sponsor the junior school, which joined with the infants to become an academy in April 2013.
- When its predecessor infant school, East Wickham Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The predecessor junior school, East Wickham Junior School, was judged to be inadequate at its last Ofsted inspection.
- The school is currently managed by the Kemnal Academies Trust.
- The school has an assessment nursery which accesses up to 12 children from Bexley local authority on part-time placements. Some of these children continue into the Resource Provision Unit, which caters for up to eight children with statements of special educational needs in Key Stage 1.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure teaching that is at least good by making sure that:
 - assessment information is used more rigorously to track pupils' progress and help staff to plan appropriate tasks for pupils of all abilities, especially the most able
 - effective guidance is given to pupils to help them improve the quality of their work.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics and improve behaviour in all lessons by providing more:
 - opportunities for pupils to explore the functions of a range of punctuation in texts and discuss their understanding of what they read
 - time for pupils to use teachers' advice to improve their written pieces
 - training opportunities for teachers and additional adults to improve their mathematical knowledge and skills.
- Strengthen leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by making sure that:
 - assessment information is used more rigorously to check on teaching and pupils' progress from their different starting points
 - subject leaders have thorough systems in place to check on the impact of new strategies in developing pupils' writing and mathematical skills and quickly make adjustments when necessary
 - 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 some pupils, including the most able, do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children join the Nursery and Reception with skill levels that are generally below those expected for their age, especially in reading, writing and communication and language. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and in the assessment nursery, because of good teaching and interesting activities that encourage them to learn and discover new concepts.
- Pupils often start Year 1 with attainment that is broadly in line with that of their peers nationally. Over time their attainment in reading and writing fluctuates and they make inconsistent progress because there is variation in the quality of teaching.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in the check on phonics (linking of letters and sounds) has been either similar or above the national average.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils generally make good progress in mathematics because more challenging work is given to the most able and the activities appropriately match their abilities.
- In the Resource Provision Unit, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they feel secure and benefit from good teaching that meets their individual needs.
- In the most recent Key Stage 2 tests, results showed that some pupils had made very slow progress in reading and mathematics. Most pupils made good progress in writing in the 2013 assessments. Leaders have now put some strategies in place that have effectively reduced underachievement for most pupils.
- Although most pupils, including the most able, currently do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, they are making better progress than in previous years because leaders have effectively removed weaker teaching and improved pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Most pupils, including the most able, do not make good progress in reading because they are not given enough opportunities to explore the function of punctuation in texts. Sometimes they do not understand what they read because they do not often apply their knowledge of phonics accurately and adults do not always talk to them about what they have read.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not rapid enough because they often do not use teachers' comments to improve their written pieces in lessons.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics requires improvement because some teachers and additional adults do not have secure enough knowledge of the subject to teach mathematics with confidence and accuracy.
- Most pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium, make similar or better progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Where progress is better than that of their peers, this is because they receive good quality support in lessons.
- In 2013, the attainment of Year 6 pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium was over a term above that of their peers in reading, and half a term above their peers' in writing. However, their attainment in mathematics was almost two terms behind their peers'. This is because of previous underachievement and some weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not always use information on pupils'

achievement information effectively. Some of the tasks set in lessons are either too easy or too hard for some pupils. As a result, pupils do not make good progress over time.

- Although pupils get regular praise and comments from teachers to help them improve, some of the advice does not provide enough guidance to help them improve and make rapid gains in their learning.
- In books where the advice is more detailed, some pupils do not use the guidance given to improve their work. Consequently, they do not make good progress because they do not often revisit and make corrections to previous work.
- In the 'Big Maths' sessions, some of the small group activities are of little benefit to some of the pupils because the tasks either lack challenge or some pupils are not given effective support to help them improve. A few pupils continuously repeat concepts that they are already confident in.
- In an outstanding Year 1 mathematics lesson, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, made exceptional progress because they were continuously stretched to apply their knowledge to solving more difficult concepts.
- Teaching in the Resource Provision Unit is good because teachers and additional adults provide a wide range of activities that are well matched to pupils' needs, in a calm learning environment. As a result, they make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Although pupils' behaviour has recently improved in lessons and around the school, their behaviour in lessons is sometimes less than good, especially where teaching requires improvement. In these lessons, they get easily distracted or become a little restless when the work is too easy or too difficult.
- The majority of pupils show respect for their peers and adults. They often display good manners and take pride in the school. Their attendance has also improved.
- Pupils say that bullying is uncommon and dealt with effectively. 'Anti-bullying' is a focus during personal, social, health and economic sessions. They are aware of cyber bullying and how to keep themselves safe while using the internet.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are aware of how to respond to various risks. Parents and carers who were interviewed and those who responded to Parent View feel that their children are safe and are pleased with the improvements in pupils' behaviour.
- The school has a nurture room which is used for pupils with challenging behaviour, and counselling sessions are provided by learning and behaviour mentors. As a result, there is now a calm atmosphere and pupils know what is expected of them.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors say that behaviour has improved. In assemblies, pupils behave well and parents are invited to celebrate with their children as they are rewarded for being 'star of the week' because they have worked well or put great effort in their work.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The gates are securely locked and visitors have to sign in and out when leaving either the infants or junior site. The Early Years Foundation Stage has its own separate outdoor area for pupils to play and learn securely.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders do not rigorously use assessment information to check on pupils' progress from their starting points. Their expectations are a little too low for a few year groups.
- Although leaders have put some firm plans in place to speed up pupils' progress, especially in writing and mathematics, some subject leaders do not thoroughly check on and evaluate the impact of these new approaches and make necessary adjustments to the arrangements. For example, some small group support sessions in mathematics do not effectively help pupils to improve their knowledge and skills quickly.

- Leaders check on the weekly feedback that pupils receive when doing the 'Big Write' sessions but they have not rigorously challenged teachers to provide more regular and detailed feedback to pupils to help them improve their daily written pieces. Consequently, pupils make uneven progress in writing across different year groups.
- Leaders', including governors', evaluation of aspects the school's work is overgenerous, especially for behaviour and leadership and management. There is not enough awareness that some pupils' attitude to their learning is not yet good, or that the roles of a few middle and senior leaders are not fully developed.
- Although teaching is not yet good, leaders have put adequate systems in place to check on teaching, and teachers' performance is linked to pupils making at least good progress. However, some leaders' evaluation of teaching is slightly too generous, especially at Key Stage 2.
- The executive headteacher has put firm systems in place to make sure that pupils know the current levels that they are working at, and this information is shared with parents.
- Pupils' physical development is promoted well and the government's primary sport funding is used to employ qualified sports coaches to work alongside teachers when teaching physical education. The funding is also used to improve existing teaching resources, provide swimming lessons for all Year 5 pupils and provide opportunities for them to compete in some sporting events.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is promoted well through assemblies and personal, social, health and economic sessions. In assemblies pupils happily applaud the success of other pupils and they are attentive listeners. Various displays around the school promote ideas that are easy for pupils to understand, encourage friendships and endorse an inclusive atmosphere.
- Pupils are motivated to improve their achievements further with the many photographs of former pupils' subsequent progress.
- The school has worked well with a secondary school in the academy chain to do an art outreach project and a few leaders support other schools and teachers in the Trust.
- The pupil premium is used to provide small group and one-to-one support for children with speech and language difficulties, additional reading and mathematics support, and phonics training for staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are broadly aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. They believe Key Stage 2 pupils are now making good progress but they do realise that progress over time is not yet good.
 - Governors do not rigorously challenge leaders because they have relied too much on information and predictions presented to them by leaders. Their checks lack rigour because they have not thoroughly used areas identified for improvement in the academy review report to further challenge leaders to improve teaching and speed up pupils' progress, especially for the more able.
 - A few governors have visited the school for a day to check on behaviour across all key stages and they have attended many training events with the local authority and within the Trust. This has helped to develop their skills.
 - They know the sport funding is used to 'train the trainer (teacher)' but have not thoroughly checked on how teachers' physical education knowledge and skills have developed from working with the coaches.
 - Governors have thoroughly checked the use of pupil premium funding and know that the gap in achievement has narrowed significantly between eligible pupils and their peers.
 - They have worked with the local authority and the Trust to manage the performance of the executive headteacher and they get regular updates on staff performance. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and are 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	136599
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	441277

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	662
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Jeffers
Executive headteacher	Susan Manzi
Head of infant school	Maureen Moore
Head of junior school	James Ellis
Date of previous school inspection	N/a
Telephone number	020 8854 0698
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