

# Bickley Primary School

Nightingale Lane, Bromley BR1 2SQ

**Inspection dates** 19–20 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 in reading and mathematics and reach above average standards because lessons are well planned and interesting and teachers set work at the right level for most pupils.
- Pupils make exceptionally good progress in developing a wide range of writing skills, so that in Year 6 their attainment is much higher than in most schools.
- Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and constantly challenge them to do their best.
- Promoting reading, writing and a love of books is at the heart of the school's successful planning across a range of subjects.
- Pupils always work hard in lessons. They listen carefully to teachers' explanations and quickly settle to well-planned tasks.
- Behaviour is consistently good in lessons and often exemplary. Pupils get on very well with each other and with the adults who teach and care for them. Arrangements to keep pupils safe are good.
- The headteacher sets very high expectations for the school and is relentless in her pursuit of excellence. She has been a steadying force throughout the past five years of rapid change and development.
- Leaders and managers check the quality of teaching regularly and provide good support to improve practice where necessary. Governors are well informed and provide challenge to senior leaders to ensure good achievement for all pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the activities that are planned for pupils in whole-class reading sessions and mathematics lessons do not provide enough challenge, especially for the more-able pupils.
- Teachers' marking varies in quality and does not always help pupils to improve their work.
- Some subject leaders have yet to fully develop their roles in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and the quality of teaching right across the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and looked at learning in every class. They visited 20 lessons, some for longer periods of time, some more briefly. They observed one assembly and pupils' behaviour in the playground and the dining hall. Four lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with a range of pupils, five members of the governing body, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including the support for pupils who need extra help. They heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and that displayed in classrooms and around the school.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents including behaviour logs, the tracking of individual pupils' progress, the school's development plan, the use of additional funding, safeguarding arrangements, pupils' attendance records and the minutes of governing body meetings. The views of 82 parents who responded to the online Parent View survey were taken into account as were those expressed directly to inspectors.
- Inspectors also took account of the views expressed by 25 staff members in the inspection questionnaire as well as through discussions with several members of staff.

## Inspection team

Carole Skinner, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Alastair McMeckan

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is now larger than average. Since its last inspection, the school has expanded by five classes. The number on roll has risen from 231 to 390. There are now two classes in each year group except Year 6. In addition to the headteacher, who joined the school just after the last inspection, a new deputy headteacher was appointed from within the school. The school's expansion has also resulted in changes to the senior and middle management structure.
- The school has experienced some disruption to staffing recently due to long-term sickness.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A growing number come from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is lower than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus and those with statements of special educational needs is similar to 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?

- Ensure that the more-able pupils are always given high levels of challenge in lessons by:
  - moving them on swiftly as soon as they have grasped new mathematical concepts and skills
  - providing reading activities that challenge and extend their thinking.
- Make sure marking consistently shows pupils how to improve their work and gives them time to follow this up.
- Extend the role of subject leaders so that they have a full picture of the quality of learning and pupils' progress in their subjects across the school and use this to plan future actions for improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school in developing a wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities which they learn to apply in different situations. As a result they achieve higher than average standards in English and mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- Children in Reception achieve well in all areas of learning. They quickly develop confidence and independence and are keen to learn. Good teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) helps children to make a good start in learning to read and write. This was reflected in the above average results of the Year 1 phonics check in 2013.
- Pupils achieve well in reading because the school's consistent approaches, from Reception to Year 6, inspire boys and girls alike to develop a love of books. Occasionally, however, pupils mark time a little in whole-class reading sessions when they are not working with an adult.
- Progress in writing is exceptionally good and standards in Year 6 have been much higher than average for the past three years. By the time they leave the school, most pupils write in a fluent, engaging style using a variety of different techniques. Their stories are imaginative and creative, while historical accounts are lively and interesting.
- Good teaching in mathematics ensures that pupils learn and remember important concepts and calculation strategies. Since the last inspection they have improved their ability to use and apply mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems and investigate numbers, measurement, shapes and graphs. Occasionally, more-able pupils are not moved on quickly enough in lessons and spend too long practising skills they have already mastered.
- The school has recently intensified its focus on ensuring that the most-able pupils reach the highest possible standards. As a result about a quarter of the pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to achieve Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils rise to challenges and are highly motivated learners. These high levels of challenge for the most able are not yet consistent across all year groups and subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive carefully planned support that helps them to make good, and occasionally outstanding, progress in keeping with their peers. They leave the school well equipped for secondary education.
- The very small minority of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress. Teachers are very well aware of their differing needs and track their progress carefully. The small numbers make statistical comparisons unreliable but evidence indicates that the attainment gap between these pupils and others is closing rapidly. In 2013 the few eligible pupils were about six months behind their peers overall, but a small number achieved above average levels.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good and often rapid progress as their grasp of language accelerates due to effective support in lessons and through additional teaching.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically at least good across the school with examples of exceptional practice. Teachers plan interesting lessons that engage and motivate pupils. They are adept at building pupils' confidence in their own abilities and have high expectations of both their behaviour and their ability to concentrate.
- In Reception, children develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills at a good pace. Teaching of letters and the sounds they make is reinforced through daily practice and children quickly learn to use this knowledge to work out words when they read and write.
- The school's approach to teaching literacy skills is very successful, not only in promoting pupils'

love of books, but also in developing high quality writing. Effective teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling results in well-crafted writing which is both imaginative and well structured. Year 5 pupils have created their own high quality mini-books of Greek myths for the class book corner, demonstrating excellent application of a wide range of skills.

- Teachers' skilful deployment of a range of effective teaching strategies help pupils to find deeper meaning in the texts they read and to convey their ideas skilfully in their own writing.
- The current focus on boosting reading skills through daily whole-class reading sessions is more effective in some classes than others. This is because some of the activities that are planned for pupils to do without adult supervision do not extend their reading and comprehension skills.
- Systematic teaching of mathematical concepts and calculation strategies builds effectively on pupils' prior learning and equips them well to use and apply their knowledge through investigation and problem solving. Occasionally more-able pupils are not moved on to the next stage of learning quickly enough.
- Well-trained teaching assistants support learning effectively and some provide valuable additional reinforcement of important concepts and skills through working with individual pupils and small groups.
- Teachers check how well pupils understand new ideas throughout the lesson and quickly pick up on errors and misconceptions. They use their regular checks on pupils' progress to plan tasks that build effectively on previous gains in knowledge, understanding and skills and enable pupils to learn at a suitably brisk pace.
- Marking is often good, with clear advice to pupils on how to improve their work. However, this is not consistent across the school and pupils are not always given time to follow up teachers' suggestions in order to improve their learning.
- Homework is used appropriately to support learning in class and the school provides relevant information for parents to help them understand, for example, how mathematics is taught.

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

- The vast majority of pupils clearly love being at school. This is reflected in the high attendance rates that have been maintained over the last three years. They listen very attentively to teachers, work very hard in lessons and take pride in their work.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is often exemplary in lessons because teachers maintain a calm and productive working atmosphere and make learning interesting and challenging for pupils. Very little time is lost when pupils move from one activity to the next because they are keen to get started.
- Behaviour logs show that a small number of pupils find it difficult to get on well with others at playtimes. The school has very effective methods for dealing with misbehaviour so that leaders rarely have to exclude pupils for any reason.
- Most pupils are polite and well mannered, often spontaneously opening doors for adults and showing respect for each other. Relationships are warm, both between pupils and with adults. No racist incidents have been recorded for the last four years, reflecting the school's lack of tolerance for discrimination in any form.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe at all times and they know who to talk to about any concerns. Almost all parents who responded to the inspection survey agree that their children feel safe.
- Pupils show a good understanding of different types of bullying, which they say is rare. They are confident that staff will deal quickly with any incidents that arise. School records show that these are investigated thoroughly and that parents of all those involved are kept informed of the actions the school has taken.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has steered the school with vision and determination through five years of significant change. Her high aspirations for all pupils are shared by senior leaders, staff and the governing body, who have risen to the challenges presented by the school's rapid growth.
- Frequent and rigorous checks on teaching and accurate evaluations of its quality help senior leaders to identify and share good features, as well as helping staff to make their teaching even more effective.
- Middle leaders have a clear view of standards in their subjects and know what needs to be improved. They do not always have a detailed knowledge of how good teaching and learning are in their subjects in all parts of the school so that they can provide tailored support to staff, for example in getting the most out of whole-class reading sessions.
- In termly meetings, teachers are held to account for their pupils' progress and plans are put in place to accelerate learning for those who could do better. This helps teachers to ensure consistently good and sometimes outstanding progress over time and to ensure that no group is disadvantaged.
- Performance management arrangements are thorough. Detailed records show that teachers' targets are challenging and that leaders take strong and weaker performance into account when making decisions about salary progression.
- The school gives pupils a broad and interesting variety of experiences. Stimulating topics and themes, often related to books, capture pupils' enthusiasm and provide numerous opportunities for them to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills in subjects such as history, religious education and design and technology.
- Plentiful opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are planned in daily learning as well as through assemblies focused on promoting important values. The school's close links with schools in Africa help pupils to develop a deeper awareness of global issues.
- The school makes effective use of sports premium funding to increase pupils' engagement in sports and to celebrate achievements throughout the school. While ensuring that all pupils benefit from a variety of activities in lessons, the school offers a wide range of extra-curricular sport as well as participating in inter-school sports competitions. Funding is also used to ensure teachers receive appropriate training to deliver high quality lessons that have a positive impact on pupils' healthy lifestyles and physical well-being.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on providing additional, targeted support to raise eligible pupils' attainment and accelerate their learning. Teaching assistants are trained to deliver a number of intervention programmes and funds are also used to employ the services of a counsellor, a family worker and an additional support teacher. These measures have contributed to the rapid progress made by eligible pupils in catching up with their peers.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Minor omissions from the school's central record of staff suitability checks were quickly remedied as the required information was already in place but recorded separately.
- The local authority has identified the school as one that does not require external support. Leaders work closely with a number of partner schools in the local cluster to share good practice and monitor the quality of teaching. For example, just before this inspection, the headteacher had carried out joint observations with a colleague in order to agree judgements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has played an important role in managing the school's rapid growth and has maintained an accurate view of how well it is doing. Governors are well trained to use and interpret a wide range of data and speak knowledgeably about required improvements. Governors challenge senior leaders appropriately to ensure pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are as good as possible. They set the headteacher challenging performance management targets that reflect the key priorities of the school. Governors check that expectations of teachers are high, that good teaching is rewarded appropriately, and that appropriate training helps teachers to improve. They scrutinise school finances rigorously, particularly the use and impact of the additional funding for sports and pupil premium.

## 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>	131553
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	431276

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	390
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jasmine Berry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss J Mayhew
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8460 6790
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