

Henry Cavendish Primary School Balham and Streatham

Hydethorpe Road, Balham, London, SW12 0JA

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- School leaders and governors have high expectations for all staff and pupils. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection and all pupils reach high standards in their work and their behaviour.
- Pupils work hard and achieve exceptionally well in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. Their attainment at the end of Year 6 has been significantly above average for several years.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress because highly trained teaching assistants provide excellent support for them.
- Teaching is consistently of high quality and enables pupils to make rapid progress. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is of very high quality and contributes significantly to pupils' high achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary at all times. They are friendly, courteous and caring. They get on very well with all staff and show respect and understanding towards each other and adults. They feel very safe in school.
- Leadership at all levels is outstanding. School leaders and governors are exceptionally well prepared for their roles and responsibilities. They make an excellent contribution to ensuring that teaching and learning are of the highest possible standard.
- The curriculum is exciting and stimulating. It is thoughtfully planned to provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills when learning in other subjects.
- The quality of art and music is of a very high standard and makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The delightful singing in assemblies creates a real sense of enjoyment and harmony.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of how well the school is doing and offer the right level of challenge and help to ensure the school continues to improve.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and highly value the quality of education it provides. One parent wrote, 'It is such a happy place and has made our son very happy.'

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons, several of which were carried out jointly with senior leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books and they listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read. They attended three assemblies and observed pupils in the playground and as they moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, five governors, different groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised plans for school improvement, minutes from governing body meetings, information about pupils' learning and progress, and documents to show how the school keeps pupils and staff safe.
- The views of 222 parents were considered through the online survey Parent View and by talking to parents informally during the inspection. Inspectors also considered letters from five parents.
- Staff views were taken into account by analysing the 64 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Elson	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Verna Plummer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school and is situated on two separate sites. It is increasing in size year on year so that, by September 2016, it will provide four forms of entry for pupils in each year group.
- About one fifth of the pupils are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support those pupils who, in this school, are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.
- About 40% of pupils are from White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than average. About a third 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 below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education (LLE) and provides support to some newly appointed headteachers in the local authority.
- There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting so that they consistently write neatly and legibly in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- All pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, White British pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, make excellent progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above average by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make exceptional progress from their starting points. Staff are highly skilled at pinpointing their specific difficulties and providing exactly the right level of help so they progress at similar rates to their classmates.
- The most able pupils achieve exceptionally well because they are challenged in lessons and provided with harder work that enables them to reach the higher Level 6 in the national tests.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding receive extra help in lessons and this has increased their confidence enabling them to learn well. They make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reached levels similar to other pupils in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 in 2013. Although they were still about a term behind other pupils in mathematics, the gap closed considerably from the previous year. This shows how well the school promotes equality of opportunity.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age. They settle quickly and are happy in school because adults make them feel safe and secure. They progress well in their literacy and numeracy skills so that by the time they start Year 1, most can read and write simple stories, and count and add together numbers to 20 and beyond.
- Pupils across the school enjoy reading. In Year 2 one pupil was so engrossed in the story that she wanted to read the entire book. The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is systematic and equips pupils with the skills to read and write unfamiliar words confidently. By Year 6, pupils read fluently both to find information and to read for pleasure.
- The quality of pupils' writing is high across the school. Most pupils write extensively using a rich and imaginative vocabulary that engages the interest of the reader. Their spelling and punctuation are accurate and they use figurative language effectively to add detail to their writing. Despite this, their handwriting is sometimes careless and untidy and spoils the overall appearance of their work.

Pupils love mathematics because teachers make lessons interesting and purposeful. In a Year 1 lesson for example, in which pupils were learning about position and direction, teachers set out cones in a grid in the playground. Pupils planned and then presented their partner with mathematical directions to locate a particular point. This helped pupils to learn about quarter turns, anti-clockwise and the points of the compass.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching over time is outstanding across the school. Classrooms are bright and well organised with high-quality displays that support pupils' learning.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning because teachers provide them with work that is at the right level and this enables them to make excellent progress. Pupils regularly solve problems, and investigate and research their own ideas. Consequently, they develop excellent learning behaviours including concentration, resilience and perseverance.
- Teachers make excellent use of time and resources and this keeps all pupils on task and fully involved in learning. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher presented a short video clip of some mini-beasts and asked the pupils to raise their hand whenever they heard a fact about insects mentioned. Pupils listened intently and took great delight each time they identified a fact from the video clip.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is a lively and stimulating hub of activity in which adults provide an exciting range of activities to help children to learn and grow. The area is safe and

secure so children become confident learners. They thoroughly enjoy the activities that develop their, language, mathematical, and personal skills that successfully prepare them for Year 1.

- Highly trained teaching assistants complement the work of the teachers by providing additional help for pupils. They contribute very well to pupils' learning in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson the teaching assistant took on the role of Maid Marion in the legend of Robin Hood to stimulate pupils' imaginations. This helped pupils to explore the relationship between the actions a character might take and what emotions they might be feeling.
- A strength of teaching is the depth of questioning that probes pupils' thinking and develops their understanding. Often teachers will adjust their lesson to provide additional challenge for the most able pupils or to give support to those pupils who need more help. Consequently, all pupils make excellent progress, whatever their ability.
- Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and provide detailed comments telling them how they can improve their work. Pupils respond to these comments by correcting their work and so learn from their mistakes. Often pupils reply to teachers' comments with their own suggestions, showing that they fully understand how they are learning and progressing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils say they can always get on with their work and that lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils understand and respond to the high expectations for their behaviour because all staff implement the school's policies consistently.
- Pupils are exceptionally well mannered. They help each other in class and around school. They are polite, helpful and courteous to each other and to adults. They listen attentively in class and they move around the school safely and sensibly when going out to play or to other lessons.
- The school is bright, stimulating and attractive. Pupils of all ages have plenty of opportunities to work and play inside and outdoors. Pupils value this and take great care of the school environment. Consequently, there is no litter and all areas are clean and tidy.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on very well together. They say there is no discrimination and that all staff treat them equally and fairly. They respect the faiths and beliefs of those from other backgrounds and enjoy celebrating each other's special festivals. Racial harmony is a real strength of the school demonstrating how well the school fosters good relationships.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils understand different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and are adamant that it does not happen. School records show very few recorded incidents of poor behaviour and there have been no exclusions in the past year.
- The very large majority of parents agree behaviour is outstanding and that their children are very happy and safe in school.
- Attendance has improved and is above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has created a very strong team of staff who share her high expectations and aspirations. Together with governors, they have established a vibrant learning community in which all pupils thrive and flourish, academically and personally. As a LLE, the headteacher provides support to other local schools and other staff often work alongside colleagues from local schools to develop their skills.
- School leaders are very reflective and have an excellent understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. They have improved many aspects of the school's work since the last inspection and have well-considered plans in place for improvement, clearly demonstrating that they can improve further.
- There has been a very strong drive to improve teaching and, consequently, it is of high quality.

There are rigorous systems in place to check the work of teachers through formal and informal lesson observations. Teachers are set clear targets for improvement and receive high quality training to help them to improve their skills. Staff are fully aware that their progression on the salary scale is dependent on their performance in the classroom and their pupils' progress.

- Middle leaders benefit from opportunities to build their leadership and management skills and they make a significant contribution to raising standards across the school.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school and were delighted to share their views with inspectors. One parent wrote, 'We are so lucky to have such an outstanding school in our local community.' This echoed the view of many parents who spoke informally with inspectors.
- The pupil premium funding has been very effectively targeted towards meeting the academic or social needs of eligible pupils. Consequently, these pupils have developed confidence to do very well at school.
- The curriculum is exciting with opportunities for pupils to learn both inside and outside. Music and art are taught exceptionally well and pupils across the school learn about life in other countries and other times. This promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.
- The additional sports funding has been used to employ sports coaches to work alongside staff. As a result, adults are also developing their skills so that they have a long-lasting impact. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of physical activities, including swimming, to keep them healthy and fit.
- The local authority provides appropriate low-level support to this high achieving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully involved in shaping the direction of the school and strike the right balance of support and challenge to school leaders. They visit school regularly and receive high quality information from school leaders so they know the school well. Governors use published information to inform them of how well the school performs in comparison with schools nationally. They have a wide range of professional skills and experience that they use to make decisions and to evaluate the impact of their actions. Governors are very well trained and carry out all their statutory responsibilities very effectively. They know that the pupil premium funding has been spent wisely to improve pupils' academic and social development. Governors ensure arrangements for keeping staff and pupils safe are robust. They have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and ensure a strong link is maintained between teachers' effectiveness and their salaries.

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	100567
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	434612

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	767
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gay Wenban-Smith
Headteacher	Alexandra Hardy
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2009
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