

St Michael at Bowes CofE Junior School

Tottenham Road, London, N13 6JB

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Strong leadership from the headteacher, senior and subject leaders keeps the focus on improving teaching and learning at the heart of the school's work.
- Governors support the school well in its endeavours and check carefully on progress towards meeting its targets.
- Overall good teaching is enabling pupils to learn new ideas securely and make good progress over time, so that pupils' achievement is at least good.
- The additional adults supporting learning are highly skilled and make a significant contribution to the progress of pupils in each class.
- The school's status as a 'Rights Respecting School' permeates all that it does and has a very strong influence on the pupils' personal development.
- The pupils' exemplary behaviour and very positive approach to learning make for an orderly school and calm classrooms. Pupils greatly enjoy school and value the support from their teachers. This is reflected in their rising attendance levels.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and have many ways of accessing support if they need it.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not always interesting enough to stimulate the pupils' imaginations and thinking.
- The progress of the most able pupils slows at times because not all teachers set them challenging enough work.
- Learning slows at times because teachers do not check carefully whether pupils understand fully and this leaves some confused.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons. In each of these lessons, inspectors examined the work in pupils' books. Six lessons were seen together with the headteacher or other senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, a representative from the local authority, and a representative from the London Diocesan Board for Schools.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and held informal discussions with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took into account of a survey undertaken by the school earlier this year with 54 responses.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including the school's own information on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gill Walley

Additional Inspector

Peter Lacey-Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the majority of primary schools.
- Almost all pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Two thirds speak English as an additional language. Many are at the early stages of learning English.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for a well above average proportion of the pupils. This is additional government funding which, in this school, supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average and falling.
- More pupils than in most other primary schools join or leave part-way through their primary education.
- 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 teaching by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are always given work that challenges them and enables them to make the best possible progress
 - teachers set work in lessons to engage the interest of all pupils and stimulates their thinking
 - teachers carefully check the pupils' learning and understanding of the work they are doing and adjust their teaching accordingly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from their varied starting points. Attainment is above average and rising by the end of Year 6. There is no difference in the achievement of pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. The most able pupils achieve well but not consistently so across all subjects and all year groups.
- Having risen the year before, Year 6 test results fell in 2013. This was largely because relatively few pupils reached the higher Level 5 in any subject. Action taken by teachers is leading to many more pupils working at higher levels in all year groups.
- The school has raised the profile of the importance of reading at home and, as a result, pupils now read often and widely. Their interest in books and enjoyment of reading is stimulated by thoughtfully stocked book corners in each classroom and annual visits by published authors.
- Progress in writing has risen. Pupils regularly have the opportunity to build up their own extended pieces of writing, having first seen a model of writing to imitate. Their writing in a wide range of styles becomes more adventurous as they move through the school and benefits from opportunities to apply their skills in their topics and other subjects.
- The school has put great emphasis on ensuring that pupils who speak English as an additional language understand formal language conventions. This and many opportunities for talk and discussion underpin their good language development. Pupils who join the school part-way through the year make good progress once they have achieved fluency and understanding.
- The good progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is based on the clear understanding of each pupil's barriers to learning. The school works closely with parents and other agencies, and is tenacious in obtaining funding to provide additional support. This enables these pupils to be fully integrated into classes and school life so that there is no discrimination.
- The school uses additional funding well and ensures that there is equality of opportunity. Small group teaching, Easter booster classes, providing places at breakfast and after-school clubs and subsidising trips are leading to eligible pupils making good progress across all subjects. The gap in Year 6 test results in 2013 was small between these pupils and others in the year group. It amounted to one term in mathematics and slightly more than this in writing. There was no gap in reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers use their questions to draw out ideas from pupils and continually require them to reflect on how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Pupils learn well from each other when sharing ideas about their tasks.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to apply their number skills when solving problems or undertaking mathematical investigations. In one lesson seen, Year 3 pupils solved word problems collaboratively. The teacher nominated 'mathematics captains' who worked with each group, explaining possible methods clearly which helped to clarify the captain's and other pupils' understanding.
- Work in pupils' books shows they now regularly learn science through practical activities. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. A good example seen during the inspection involved Year 5 pupils using scientific equipment correctly to explore ideas about solids, liquids and gases. This helped them to deepen their understanding and develop their practical skills.
- Teachers check pupils' learning and progress after each lesson in order to plan for the next. Several teachers were also seen to respond quickly and adjust their teaching during a lesson in response to the pupils' learning. However, this is not always the case. On occasion, learning slows because teachers do not spot soon enough that some pupils are floundering as they do not understand what is being taught.

- Teachers deploy support staff well so that their impact on pupils' learning is maximised. Many were observed taking the initiative and adapting materials in response to the learning of the pupils with whom they were working. Teaching assistants are trained well to lead support programmes for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This contributes to their good learning.
- In most cases, teaching engages the pupils and keeps them engrossed because work makes them think hard and meets their individual needs. However, at times the most able are not given work that broadens or extends their understanding enough and so their progress slows. Furthermore, on a small number of occasions, teaching and work set are not sufficiently stimulating to inspire the pupils. Learning stalls as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of the pupils is outstanding. They continually try to live the school's values by being very caring and compassionate and showing great respect for others. Pupils are very considerate and do their utmost to make sure everyone is happy and that no-one is left out. This includes helping newcomers to settle into school as quickly as possible.
- Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and with great pride. This includes being trained to work as peer mentors in the infant school, supporting learning in lessons as subject captains or as subject team members working alongside staff to organise events such as World Book Day.
- Pupils genuinely enjoy school and are very keen to do well. Even when individuals struggle with some of the work, they try hard at all times and listen very carefully to their teachers and each other. Their attendance has improved and is now above average. At the same time, the number of persistent absentees has fallen significantly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are very robust and their impact closely monitored. Pupils are acutely aware of what constitutes different forms of bullying. School records confirm the pupils' view that incidents are extremely rare and dealt with swiftly. Their parents agree.
- Pupils learn how to spot and deal with risks they might encounter now and in the future. Assemblies regularly teach them about how to use the internet safely. Visits from the police and fire service are built into a Year 5 topic and Year 6 pupils are taught how to use a bicycle safely. This helps pupils to have a thorough understanding of safety at home and in the community.

The leadership and management are good

- Staff and governors share the headteacher's ambition for the school and its pupils. She leads the school with energy and drive, making sure everyone is focused on improving teaching and learning. Senior and subject leaders make a considerable contribution to this priority. Their high levels of expertise are regularly extended through well-planned training, including working with the diocesan board to strengthen their skills in interpretation of data about the school's performance compared with that seen nationally. As a result, the school has the capacity to make further improvements.
- By checking carefully the performance of each teacher, individual training programmes are put in place to enable them to improve. Expertise within school is used well to support and guide teachers by demonstrating lessons or working alongside them in the classroom. Targets set are such that pupils should make at least good progress in their class. The result is that teaching is usually at least good and improving.
- The headteacher is strongly committed to working in partnership with others to share expertise in her drive to improve teaching. Engagement with the local authority is close and productive, such as through consultants supporting developments in literacy and numeracy. Reviews of performance in conjunction with the diocesan board have helped identify where action is needed to secure improvements.
- Everyone lives the school's values, such as those of honesty, respect, caring and fairness in all

that they do. Pupils and adults can nominate each other to recognise when a value has been evident in their actions. One example of their caring is that pupils remember a child victim of the Holocaust who died at Auschwitz.

- The curriculum is very carefully planned and meets the needs of the pupils well through a balance of teaching topics, skills, knowledge and understanding. Visits to places such as the Royal Institution and the Science Museum stimulate the pupils' imaginations for practical science. This is extended further by a 'Mad Science' club. Links between topics such as 'Community' and 'Active Planet' and literacy are very strong.
- Creativity and music both feature strongly through 'Creative Week' and a 'Creative Person of the Month' from each year group. The pupils' singing is of a high quality and a source of much enjoyment in assemblies. Pupils reflect through prayer and have a reflection area in an alcove in the corridor.
- The school is strongly committed to sport so pupils can adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles. New sports funding largely finances a sports leader and a coach. Through this, all pupils are now taught two hours of quality physical education lessons each week. This is also leading to greater pupil participation in sporting activities through more clubs and lunchtime activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The governing body keeps a watchful eye on the school's performance, compared to that seen nationally, making sure that the dip in attainment in 2013 is being tackled robustly by senior staff. Governors recognise the good quality of the teaching and how this has been achieved. Their level of expertise, particularly in understanding information about pupils' progress, is such that they ask appropriate questions of the headteacher and senior leaders. Governors check the impact of the resources they allocate in support of action being taken to improve the school. This includes making sure additional funding is enabling eligible pupils to make good progress. They are vigilant in ensuring that school finances are used efficiently and that only good classroom performance is rewarded by salary increases.

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	102026
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	444089

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Jakobson
Headteacher	Maria Jay
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2010
Telephone number	020 8888 6100
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