

# Benhurst Primary School

Benhurst Avenue, Elm Park, Hornchurch, R12 4QS

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- Achievement has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils now reach well-above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The attainment gap that existed between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers has closed.
- Teaching is good and some aspects are outstanding. Learning is well planned to include a rich variety of activities set at the right level for most pupils.
- School leaders set challenging targets and expectations are high. Very thorough systems for checking each pupil's progress trigger extra help where necessary so that no one is left behind.
- Leadership, including governance, is good. The headteacher has made many improvements and has built a staff team that are focused on making the school as good as it can be. This is leading to improved outcomes for pupils.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school and like the topics they study.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is extremely good and typically good in classrooms.
- Pupils feel extremely safe within this caring, welcoming and purposeful school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In Key Stage 2, fewer boys attain higher levels in reading and writing than do so in mathematics.
- Not enough is done to reinforce correct spelling and good handwriting, especially for boys.
- In Key Stage 1, slightly fewer pupils reach higher levels in mathematics than in reading. Occasionally, teachers do not build pupils' mathematical calculation skills strongly enough through, for example, giving them practical equipment to aid their understanding.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which 15 were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read from Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school’s data on attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders, teachers and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered the 60 responses to the online Parent View survey and a few letters from parents, and spoke to some parents.
- Inspectors considered responses to the 39 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders’ observations of teaching.

## Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Robin Gaff	Additional inspector
Penny Spencer	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Benhurst is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The school is growing in size. From September 2014 there will be two classes in each year group. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes.
- Most pupils are White British, although the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is a little above average. The percentage who speak English as an additional language is also a little higher than in most schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. This is additional government funding provided for looked-after children and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection, including at senior level. The headteacher took up post in September 2013.
- Pupils have opportunities to attend before- and after-school clubs but these are privately managed and were not inspected at this time. The inspection report for this provision may be found on the Ofsted website.
- 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?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and improve the consistency of pupils' achievement by making sure that teachers:
  - in Reception and Key Stage 1 spend enough time on calculation and give pupils the practical equipment they need to help them understand what they are learning
  - give boys in particular clear guidance on how to rectify spelling and handwriting weaknesses in Key Stage 2 so that their writing improves.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- As a result of improvements since the time of the previous inspection, pupils now make quick enough progress and reach the standards that they are capable of.
- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age, although a few have weaker language, communication and personal skills. Children in Reception make good progress. This is because of individual support and well-chosen activities. They move into Year 1 well placed to start the next stage of their learning.
- Pupils' continued good progress in Key Stage 1 leads to above-average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Standards in Year 2 are rising and pupils are now entering Year 3 better prepared for their junior education. However, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics is a little lower than in reading.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2 and Year 6 standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards were much improved in 2013 and they are continuing to rise. More-able pupils do well, particularly in mathematics.
- By Year 6, six out of ten pupils achieve higher levels in mathematics and the number reaching standards that are much higher than their age is increasing. Currently two out of ten pupils are reaching standards which are three years or more ahead.
- In Year 6, girls' attainment is similar in reading, writing and mathematics but fewer boys reach higher levels in reading and writing than do so in mathematics. Both boys and girls write well in a range of different ways but a few boys do not write neatly and their occasional spelling errors prevent their writing standards rising more quickly.
- Reading provision has much improved; throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading and the most proficient readers read avidly. Outcomes in Year 1 phonics checks (the sounds that letters make) have been above national figures for the last two years and pupils of all abilities learn to use their phonics skills confidently to tackle new words.
- Overall, pupils' mathematical calculation and problem-solving skills develop well. However, in Reception and Key Stage 1, pupils' progress in calculation occasionally slows. This happens when not enough time is spent on calculation or pupils do not use practical equipment to help them.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, after a school visit to the Isle of Wight, Year 6 pupils wrote persuasively about the advantages of visiting the island.
- Investigative science has been strengthened this year and pupils now have good opportunities to apply mathematics when measuring, recording and interpreting the outcomes of their experiments.
- Pupils of different ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress similar to that of their peers. This is because of the individual support they are given combined with the good teaching they receive in lessons.
- The school's assessment information is very thorough and accessible. Staff check the progress of individuals closely against ambitious targets. They pick up any underperformance quickly and put it right.
- Pupils supported by additional funding achieve well. Their achievement has rapidly improved over the past two years and in 2013 they reached standards which were above the national average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. These standards were in line with those of their peers in reading and writing but lower than their peers by about six months in mathematics.
- Current Year 6 assessment information and other inspection evidence show that this gap between mathematics and reading and writing has reduced. The school identifies the requirements of those supported by additional funding accurately and quickly supports their particular learning needs so they achieve at least as well as other pupils.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching is typically good, with aspects that are outstanding. Teaching has been a focus for improvement and the results are clear to see in the majority of lessons and in pupils' books. This is why pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Learning is enjoyable because teachers are skilled in engaging pupils and often sustain pupils' concentration throughout lessons. There are good examples of literacy and numeracy being used in real-life contexts.
- On one such occasion, after reading a story together, pupils in Year 5 worked very hard to solve mathematical problems to help a factory owner calculate amounts of materials needed for the production of goods. Pupils learned well how to convert complex verbal problems into number sums because of the systematic way in which the teacher helped pupils to understand the necessary steps.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress very well. They use information to plan lessons that build on what pupils already know. Sequences of lessons are well thought through so that pupils are able to explore ideas in a variety of ways. The work set for most pupils is at the right level.
- Phonics lessons are well taught and teachers usually enable pupils to apply their knowledge of phonics well. This is particularly effective in Reception, where children have some excellent opportunities to apply their understanding during group work led by adults or through purposeful play.
- In Reception, adults provide an exciting range of activities and staff are usually quick to seize opportunities to develop children's communication, literacy, numeracy and personal skills. Children's ideas are valued and there are some excellent opportunities for them to develop their scientific knowledge, for example, through water play. However, when the whole class is taught together teachers do not always provide enough practical materials to help children add and subtract.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. In Key Stage 1, occasionally, teachers do not spend enough time on developing pupils' mental calculation skills. In Key Stage 2, not all teachers pay close enough attention to helping pupils, especially boys, write neatly.
- Marking is regular and improving. Teachers often give pupils good suggestions for how to improve their work. However, they do not always identify individual weaknesses in spelling and handwriting, which prevents individual pupils knowing how they can rectify mistakes.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, including those learning to speak English and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is because their work is carefully planned.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show respect for each other and the school has a welcoming, happy and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils from diverse backgrounds get on extremely well together because the school places a strong emphasis on developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. This reflects the strong emphasis on ensuring from the earliest days in Reception that they are very well cared for and there are interesting things to for them to do. This is apparent in the improving levels of attendance, which is now above average.
- Their punctuality in the mornings is good and they move around the school extremely calmly and quietly to ensure punctual starts to lessons.
- Pupils are very appreciative of the improvements which have been made this year. Good-quality

displays and opportunities for pupils to celebrate their work are evident throughout the school. Pupils take good care of their school buildings and grounds.

- They are usually very attentive in lessons, although their attention occasionally wanders when the pace of lessons slows or when they are unsure of what to do. A few pupils on joining the school find it difficult to behave well for sustained periods. However, they are very well supported by staff so that disruption to lessons is rare.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel completely safe and valued as individuals. Their awareness of the dangers of bullying such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying is very well developed. They say that very little bullying occurs, that they know what to do if it happens and that staff deal with it effectively.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View and those who contacted the inspection team directly feel that pupils are safe in school and behave well.

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

- The headteacher provides very strong and effective leadership. He has successfully introduced fair systems to improve teaching and these are known to all. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and governors in his quest for ensuring the best possible outcomes for every pupil.
- Staff members understand their role in raising achievement by improving their teaching. The review of teachers' performance by leaders and governors is thorough, including deciding whether pay increases are to be awarded. As a result, there have been marked improvements in teaching, learning and achievement since the previous inspection, when the school was found to require improvement.
- Staff expectations of pupils' achievement have been raised. They benefit from very focused additional training. The local authority provides effective support in moving the school forward but their current light touch reflects the school's capacity to improve without outside help.
- Accurate self-evaluation, underpinned by rigorous assessment of pupils' progress, has led to much improvement since the previous inspection, especially in the last year. The impact of these actions is evident in the improvement in the pace of learning for the majority of pupils.
- Subject leadership is developing well. Some leaders are new and the impact of recent subject initiatives, for example for improving the teaching of mental arithmetic, has not yet been assessed across the whole school.
- The school is committed to equality of opportunity and works hard to ensure that all pupils do well. Effective systems ensure relationships are good and tackle discrimination.
- The range of subjects and topics has been reorganised and is now rich. It provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities after school such as sports clubs. Outside visits are used well to enhance pupils' learning in school. Some specialist teaching now provides increased challenge for the most able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This is leading to better achievement for these pupils.
- The school uses its primary sports funding to provide specialist coaching and training for staff. It has also been used to enter more competitions and to increase the range of sports clubs, for example in badminton and cricket. The impact of this is to develop pupils' enthusiasm and skills in a wider range of sports.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body are fully committed to the school and its further improvement. They use a good range of individual skills to support different aspects of the school, including safeguarding and child protection, and in ensuring finances are used effectively. They challenge and question school leaders and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have thorough procedures to manage the performance of the headteacher. They have up-to-date understanding of achievement data through regular training. They use a good range of information to ensure they know how the

school performs compared with other schools. Governors have fully supported the headteacher in restructuring staffing and in ensuring pay awards are based on effective teaching and good achievement. They have a secure knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school and the extent to which any gaps in achievement are being closed. They closely monitor the spending of additional funding and funds available to improve pupils' sporting achievement.

## 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>	102273
<b>Local authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	442153

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	314
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fred Steel
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Denchfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708 450807
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