

# Liberty Primary School

Western Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3EB

**Inspection dates** 1–2 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement requires improvement. The progress of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is not rapid enough to compensate for past weaknesses in their learning.
- Pupils' current progress in writing is slower than in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not write regularly at length in subjects other than English.
- Teaching requires improvement. Not all teachers check whether pupils understand the work they set them. The most able pupils often do work that is too easy for them.
- Marking and feedback do not always help pupils to improve their work, especially in writing.
- Behaviour is not good because pupils do not always concentrate well in lessons. Staff do not all have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils do not take enough care over spelling, punctuation or presentation.
- The system leaders use to check pupils' progress is not effective. Consequently, not all leaders are clear about the progress pupils make.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet secured consistently good teaching, achievement or behaviour.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leaders have ensured that teaching is good. Children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Progress is improving across the school. Pupils' attainment is rising and is closer to the standards expected.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are well cared for. Working relationships are strong.
- Reading is a particular strength of the school. Pupils enjoy reading and read widely and often.
- Pupils enjoy the exciting enrichment activities the school organises. Pupils are involved in the local community.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 19 lessons, including six joint observations with the headteacher and senior leaders. They scrutinised pupils' work to assess the progress pupils make during the year.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading in Years 2 and 6 and talked to these pupils about their learning.
- The inspection team held meetings with leaders, staff, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to a small group of pupils formally and others informally in lessons and at break time.
- Inspectors took account of 36 responses to the Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views expressed by a number of parents and carers informally at the beginning of the school day and one parent or carer who requested a meeting with the team. Forty responses to the staff questionnaire were also taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documents and policies, including the school's evaluation of its work, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies and procedures.

## Inspection team

Jill Thewlis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Liberty Primary School is larger than the average sized primary school.
- There is a specialist resource unit for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties on site. There is provision within this unit for six pupils. Currently, there are four pupils registered.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority, is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average. An above average proportion speak English as an additional language.
- A smaller than average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportions of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported at school action are above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Major refurbishment of the school has just been completed. The school is currently expanding to three form entry. At present, there are three classes in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and two classes in all other year groups.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in Years 1 to 6 so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that:
  - teachers set work that is hard enough for all pupils, particularly the most able, and check that pupils understand the tasks set
  - teachers make clear how pupils can improve their work and encourage pupils to act on the advice given
  - pupils develop good writing skills
  - pupils always do their best, particularly in spelling, punctuation and presentation.
- Improve pupils' behaviour, especially in Years 1 to 6, by making sure that:
  - pupils are motivated to behave well at all times
  - all staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - sharpening the system to check pupils' progress so that all leaders know how well pupils are achieving.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because standards are not high enough. They were below average at the end of 2013 in all subjects.
- Pupils do not make good progress when teachers do not give them hard enough work to do. The most able pupils in particular are not expected to do demanding work, particularly in writing.
- Pupils are not given enough time to write at length. The work seen in some English books is not always completed and progress is slow. The quality and quantity of pupils' written work are variable across the school. The ability of pupils to write using accurate punctuation and spelling requires improvement.
- Pupils supported through additional funding were eight months behind their classmates in mathematics. They were four months behind in reading and writing at the end of 2013. Gaps between eligible pupils and the others have been reduced successfully in most but not all year groups this year. In some year groups, pupils supported by additional funding now do better than their classmates.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those at the early stages of speaking English are supported effectively. They make similar progress to other pupils.
- Recent changes to the work pupils do in reading and mathematics help them make better progress.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make) screening check last year was slightly above the national average. Pupils are confident to read unfamiliar words. They enjoy reading and can talk in detail about the books they have read.
- Pupils who need extra help with their learning, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make generally good progress. Pupils are given good additional support. The school successfully promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination.
- Pupils in the specially resourced unit are well supported. Work in their books shows that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with low starting points. The wide range of activities provided builds their knowledge of language and mathematics. Children's physical, creative and social skills also develop well. The teaching of phonics in Reception is particularly effective in developing early reading skills.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not helping pupils make rapid progress over a sustained period of time. Pupils are not always expected to do demanding work. Pupils say that sometimes tasks are too easy, particularly for the most able.
- The quality of teaching varies across the school. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not encourage pupils' writing skills effectively because pupils are not given enough practice in writing. When pupils produce only modest amounts of work or when it is poorly punctuated and presented, their learning is diminished.
- Pupils are not always well motivated by the work they are set and their attention wanders. A few pupils miss important information about the work teachers set them when they talk during teachers' explanations.
- Teachers do not always make clear how pupils can improve their work. The impact of teachers' feedback and guidance is limited when too few pupils respond to teachers' suggestions.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy a wide range of activities inside and in the outdoor areas. They are well prepared for Year 1 because basic skills are taught well. The work in their books is neat and well presented. Children from all backgrounds work and play well together because they know what is expected.

- Adults give effective support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so that they learn well and make good progress. Teaching in the specially resourced unit is good and pupils make good progress. Teachers set work that is suitably difficult.
- Teaching assistants provide pupils with helpful advice and support them to improve their work. Working relationships are positive.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils say that lessons are sometimes disrupted because of poor behaviour. They say that not all members of staff deal with behaviour in the same way.
- Pupils are clear about the different forms of bullying. Pupils say there is some bullying. They say the school is quick to act if any bullying occurs but the action is not always fully effective.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities, for example, peer mediation, sports leadership and the role of house captains. Pupils are proud of this work and take their responsibilities seriously.
- Attendance is still below average but it is improving due to effective actions taken by the school.
- Pupils enjoy school and say that it is a friendly place. Strong links with the local community promote good social skills. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. The behaviour of the pupils in the specially resourced unit is outstanding because there are very clear expectations which are consistently applied.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and know who to turn to should they need help. They know how to avoid dangers within the school and beyond the school gates.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk. They know how to keep themselves safe when using information and communication technology.

### **The leadership and management** require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Leaders have not yet secured consistently good teaching or achievement since the previous inspection. Checks on pupils' achievement have not helped leaders to understand accurately the progress pupils make within the school. This has contributed to the over generous view the school has of its achievements.
- Actions taken since September are beginning to have a positive impact on the progress of pupils currently in the school. However they have not been in place long enough to show a lasting impact over a sustained period.
- Leaders have not made sure that pupils develop their writing skills successfully. Subject planning has not made sure that pupils practise writing regularly enough.
- Leaders have improved the teaching of reading and mathematics. Recent improvements in rates of pupils' progress indicate that the school's leaders have the capacity to take the school forward.
- Parents and carers are generally supportive of the school and value the workshops the school organises to help them support their children's learning.
- Leadership of the specially resourced unit is good because teaching and pupils' achievement are good.
- The school has received extensive support from the local authority and this is helping the school to make improvements to the quality of teaching and the progress of the pupils.
- The additional funding provided by the government to ensure that pupils have increased access to sporting activities is used well. Pupils have a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs led by sports coaches. Pupils take part in competitions regularly. Staff have received training and are now providing additional sports clubs to improve the physical well-being of pupils. Standards are rising as a result.
- The school organises a wide range of activities to enrich learning and develop pupils' spiritual,

social, moral and cultural education. They have many opportunities to develop their skills through music, art and sport. Pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities are made to feel welcome and part of the school community.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Since the previous inspection, governance has improved through more training and the recruitment of governors with key skills. They are clear about the link between teachers' performance and pay. Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including teaching quality. They are able to compare pupils' performance with other schools locally and nationally. Governors manage the performance of the headteacher appropriately. They understand how additional funding is spent, but do not check its impact fully. Governors are clear about how the additional funding for physical education is spent. They make sure the school meets statutory safeguarding requirements.

## 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>	102656
<b>Local authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	442148

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

<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	551
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stella Croissant
<b>Headteacher</b>	Irene Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 January 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8646 5290
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