

Sparrow Farm Junior School

Sparrow Farm Drive, Feltham TW14 0DG

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 from low starting points to reach average attainment in writing and reading and above-average attainment in mathematics.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that there has been good progress since the last inspection.
- Teaching is consistently good. Systems to check pupils' progress are robust and carefully targeted support is provided for pupils who are at risk of falling behind other pupils.
- Pupils respond well to their teachers' thorough marking and guidance and this supports their good progress.
- Support staff, who work with pupils in need of extra help, make a strong contribution to pupils' successful learning.
- Effective planning and support for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development are at the heart of the school's success. This underpins pupils' good behaviour. Pupils feel safe at school.
- The wide variety of themes and activities provided by the school ensures that pupils develop skills in a broad range of subjects.
- The governing body effectively holds the school to account for its performance and the management of its finances.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Consequently, a minority of pupils do not achieve as well as they could in aspects of reading and writing.
- The range of written work that pupils are expected to produce in other subjects is too limited. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise and build on newly acquired skills.
- Subject leaders do not always identify precise actions that will increase all pupils' progress. They do not always check that class teachers have followed their guidance and advice.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 14 lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors carried out a series of short visits to other lessons across the school and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, as well as a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 123 responses to the school’s own parent view survey, as well as the views of the parents they met. Inspectors also considered the 26 responses to the school’s own staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including national test results and the school’s own information about pupils’ achievement. Inspectors also took into account the school’s self-evaluation, school improvement plans, safeguarding policies, and records and documents relating to staff performance.

Inspection team

Lesley Leak, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Phillip Littlejohn

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized junior school, with two classes in each year.
- At the time of the inspection, a significant building programme was under way to accommodate the expansion to three forms of entry by 2017.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is higher than the national average. This additional government funding is for children who are looked after and for pupils known to be eligible free school meals.
- A high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well above the national average. Approximately half of this group are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- Many pupils join and leave the school at various points other than at the usual times.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is higher than the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher took up her post shortly before the inspection.
- The Chair of the Governing Body has been in post for approximately one year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching from good to outstanding so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress by ensuring that:
 - expectations are clear so that pupils know how much time they have to complete a piece of work
 - the most able pupils read more widely to extend their vocabulary
 - there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills across a range of subjects and for a variety of different purposes.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders so that they:
 - effectively analyse information and improve their ability to take precise actions to raise achievement
 - regularly check teaching and learning to ensure improvements are made.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils enter the school with attainment which is below that expected for their age. When they leave Year 6, most pupils reach above average standards in mathematics. Their attainment in reading and writing is in line with that seen nationally. These improvements in pupils' attainment result from strengthened teaching and well-targeted support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind.
- The range and quality of writing in some pupils' books across a variety of subjects do not consistently reflect the writing skills pupils have been taught in English lessons and this limits the progress they make.
- The school actively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. It ensures that groups such as those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in English and mathematics from their different starting points.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed because they are given many opportunities to discuss their ideas with a talk partner. As a result, pupils with English as an additional language are confident speakers of English.
- Pupils supported through additional funding secure higher attainment in English and mathematics than that achieved by similar pupils nationally. Although the achievement gap is narrowing between pupils supported in this way and other pupils at the school, there is still a three-month difference in their attainment.
- The proportion of the most able pupils achieving at the highest levels, in both English and mathematics, is broadly in line with that seen nationally. The school has been effective in securing the highest attainment levels in mathematics. For example, approximately ten percent of Year 6 pupils secured the well above average Level 6 in mathematics last year.
- Not enough of the most able pupils in Year 6 are achieving above average levels in reading. The school recognises that these pupils have not always been encouraged to extend their vocabulary or to read more widely.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn in a purposeful and welcoming environment which promotes good relationships and high expectations for behaviour and achievement.
- Consistently good teaching has brought about accelerated achievement in mathematics over the past 18 months. Pupils have good basic numeracy skills, as a result of the school's emphasis on number bonds.
- Pupils learn well when they are encouraged to apply their newly acquired mathematical knowledge and skills in 'real life' situations. During the inspection, teams of Year 6 pupils worked enthusiastically to market and sell a variety of cakes and biscuits, at a profit. This involved logging prices, goods sold and profits made, on an electronic spreadsheet. Pupils' information, communication and technology expertise as well as their mathematical skills were strongly developed through this activity.
- A good range of strategies are in place to support those pupils in need of extra help which enables them to learn well. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because they benefit from extra support from additional staff who are well trained and highly effective in their role.
- Marking is regular and pupils are provided with helpful guidance on how to improve the quality of their work. Teachers are careful to ensure that pupils are clear about their next steps in learning and have time to correct their mistakes. This has developed pupils' confidence in understanding how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Pupils' spelling has improved since the last inspection, as a result of the school's rigorous focus

on teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Together with an emphasis on comprehension skills, this has helped to improve most pupils' basic reading skills.

- The most able pupils have not always been encouraged to extend their vocabulary or to read widely enough. The school recognises this and has it as a priority in forward planning.
- Teachers do not always give pupils sufficient opportunity to use and extend skills through writing for different purposes. For example, some pupils were unsure how a formal letter is constructed because it had not been explained to them.
- Occasionally, when teachers do not set time limits for the completion of work some pupils complete their work too quickly and others lose impetus and work too slowly. In both circumstances their work suffers. Consequently, pupils' progress does not always match their capabilities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff and parents agree that relationships are typically good and pupils are polite and courteous to each other. Pupils enjoy coming to school and there is a significant improvement in their attendance, which is now average and improving.
- Pupils have strong social skills. They are eager to learn and are highly motivated. They get on extremely well together and respond positively to adults, and this contributes to their successful learning.
- Pupils value the many opportunities to take on important roles and responsibilities, such as being on the Junior Leadership Team or as youth leaders, librarians and 'Eco warriors'. For example, an impressive Year 6 pupil runs a very popular weekly 'magic' club for 15 pupils.
- Robust behaviour routines are well established and any infrequent incidents of inattention are managed effectively by the teachers and support staff. As a result, attitudes to learning over time are good.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying such as homophobic and cyber bullying. They learn about internet safety. Pupils say that on the extremely rare occasions when bullying does occur, it is dealt with swiftly by the school. Pupils have a clear understanding of the risks in life beyond school, including through the use of internet based devices.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. High-quality risk assessments of the site, much of which is under construction, are regularly undertaken to check that pupils are kept safe. Pupils who spoke with inspectors confirmed that they feel safe and very well cared for.

The leadership and management are good

- The previous headteacher and the current deputy headteacher brought rigour to school systems for managing staff performance since the last inspection. These positive initiatives are being continued through the drive and ambition being shown by the new headteacher. Senior leaders keep everyone focused on teaching and learning. The school's accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses has led to rising standards in pupils' achievement.
- The investment in high-quality training for staff is having a positive impact on their classroom performance. This has led to the improved teaching of spelling, numeracy and physical education.
- The new headteacher's plan to increase the effectiveness of the school's senior and middle leadership teams is well placed. Subject leaders are not all yet proficient at identifying exactly what needs to improve in their subject areas. They do not always check whether class teachers have made the necessary improvements to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress.
- Good provision for the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development contributes to pupils' good behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate the diversity of different cultures and faiths and time is made for reflection. The school provides many

opportunities for children to experience the arts through educational visits. Assemblies successfully promote pupils' understanding of moral issues.

- The subjects taught meet most pupils' needs and interests. The school offers a variety of enrichment activities such as French, choir, radio club and football. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully identified where further development was needed, such as in mathematics and reading. The school is currently considering ways to increase attainment in reading for the most able and is taking steps to improve writing across the school.
- The school makes effective use of the additional funding for sport by employing a sports coach who is training staff to improve the quality of sports provision. The school has recently recruited sports leaders in Year 6 to help with lunchtime activities, a time when many children like to be involved. During the inspection, pupil representatives from the school won the borough sports competition.
- The school engages well with parents. Parents from a wide range of cultural backgrounds take advantage of termly reading and mathematics workshops provided by the school to help their children at home.
- The school has enjoyed a strong partnership with the local authority, welcoming the effective support it receives.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have undertaken a review of their performance since the last inspection. Governors, many of whom are new to the role, have benefited from relevant training about ways to keep the school under review and how to rigorously follow up on areas where the school could be doing better. They know how well the school performs against national and local standards and pay close attention to the school's pupil performance information. They monitor how the pupil premium funding is allocated and are pleased that gaps in attainment have narrowed as a result. They hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance and the management of its finances which are sound and linked to the school's educational priorities. Governors make sure that the system for managing the performance of staff is robust and linked closely to pay for teachers and senior leaders. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and seeks out parents' views of important issues.

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	102508
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	442155

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Wells
Headteacher	Donna Ellis
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 January 2013
Telephone number	020 8890 7194
Fax number	020 9751 1322
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