

Branfil Primary School

Cedar Avenue, Upminster, RM14 2LW

Inspection dates 3–4 July 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above the national average in mathematics and in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Progress in reading has improved considerably since 2013 because the system for teaching it was reorganised.
- Teaching is good because most activities are carefully planned at the right level for pupils and this helps them to make good progress.
- Leaders, managers and governors have ensured that teaching and achievement have improved. Governors are well informed and understand how well the school is doing.
- The headteacher and leadership team have set clear expectations for good teaching and support their staff to improve their practice.
- Pupils speak very highly of their school. They feel safe, behave well and treat adults and each other with kindness and courtesy.
- Provision in the school for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong.
- The younger children get off to a good start in the Reception classes.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The most able pupils in Key Stage 1 do not always attain the highest levels that they are capable of by the end of Year 2, particularly in mathematics.
- The precise steps that pupils must take to reach the next level are not always clear to the pupils through teachers' marking.
- Teachers do not always ask the most able pupils questions that make them think deeply about topics and help them to progress to the highest levels.
- Not all teachers are marking in as much detail in mathematics and other subjects as they are in English.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 16 teachers. In addition they observed pupils' activities during breakfast club and other clubs, at an assembly and during a borough religious education conference hosted by the school.
- A lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher who also accompanied an inspector on an additional series of short visits to classrooms to look at reading routines. The deputy headteacher accompanied an inspector on a series of short visits around the school and joined an inspector in a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and subject and school leaders. A discussion took place between an inspector and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 71 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as informal discussions with parents and carers and two letters. The views of the staff were taken into account through meetings and the 32 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choice of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current as well as previous academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning documents were examined.
- Records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including the school's single central record of security checks on staff, were examined. Behaviour logs and attendance records were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clementina Olufunke Aina	Additional Inspector
John Hicks	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of three Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium, which is extra money provided by the government for pupils who are eligible for free school meals and for looked after children, is well below the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. There is a small proportion of pupils of Other White heritage and the proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is in line with the average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has experienced expansion since the previous inspection with additional classes added.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that pupils make more rapid progress by:
 - making sure that all staff ask frequent and probing questions that require the most able pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 1, to give the detailed and thoughtful explanations needed to attain the highest levels
 - making sure that marking in mathematics and other subjects is as thorough as that in English
 - always including clear advice to pupils in the marking about the steps that must be taken to improve their levels of attainment.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception classes with skills that are broadly typical for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress and join Key Stage 1 with levels of development that are well above the national average.
- Scrutiny of the progress records of pupils currently in Key Stage 1 indicate that most pupils are now making good progress in all subjects. However, the most able pupils in Key Stage 1, who exceeded expectations at the end of the Reception Year, do not always attain the highest levels that they are capable of, particularly in mathematics.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have attained above national figures in mathematics and spelling, punctuation and grammar in recent years. The dip in performance in reading in 2013 has been addressed. The most recent summary of Year 6 performance also shows an improvement in writing attainment compared with pupils at this stage last year.
- Commitment to equal opportunities is evident because progress is good for all pupils regardless of their different starting points. In classes where there are groups of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, they too are making the same good progress as their classmates. This also applies to pupils from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language. This is because a focused training programme has been introduced for those who support small groups in and outside the classroom, leading to better progress for these pupils.
- The most able pupils made good progress by the end of Key Stage 2 last year and recent school records show that increasing proportions of the most able pupils are now attaining high scores in writing and mathematics. The work seen in their books was of a high standard. However, leaders are aware of the need to set these pupils more challenging targets and extended tasks in Key Stage 1 and to use questioning skilfully to develop their skills further.
- Money from the pupil premium grant is used effectively to pay for small-group activities in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013 eligible pupils were approximately six months behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result of individual support, many of these pupils throughout the school make good progress and are catching up well with their classmates. In Year 1 they are now outperforming their peers in all subjects. The gap for the current Year 6 has also closed to less than two months in reading and less than four months in writing and mathematics.
- There has been a renewed focus on phonics (the linking of sounds to letters) so that higher proportions of pupils met the required standard in the phonics screening check last year than in 2012. School records indicate that this trend of improvement is likely to continue this year.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because strong and supportive relationships are established between all adults and pupils in the classroom so pupils are keen to learn. Well-planned and interesting tasks set at the right level of difficulty result in pupils making good progress.
- For example, in Year 3 pupils were enthused by the opportunity to draw up poems in the form of riddles about their classroom. Because the teacher provided stimulating published poems, timed discussion and clear guidance, pupils were able to draft poems of their own, enlivening their initial drafts with richer vocabulary. As a consequence, all groups made good progress.
- Pupils understand the accuracy of their answers because teachers mark their work regularly and check that the pupils are subsequently responding to the advice given in their English books. However, teaching is good rather than outstanding because teachers are not consistently using the same approach to marking in other subjects, including mathematics, nor identifying the precise steps necessary to move to the next level. This slows pupils' progress.

- Where teaching is most effective, adults reshape tasks quickly to make sure the work is neither too easy nor too difficult if pupils are not succeeding. A few staff are not as skilled as others in this respect.
- Well-trained teaching assistants give good quality support to pupils who need additional help to complete tasks.
- Although the more able pupils are given suitably difficult tasks, they are not always challenged by questions that support the deep and extended thinking required for them to meet the highest levels of attainment.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage skilfully blends the activities led by the teacher and those chosen by the children to support confident self-expression. Adults' questions draw out descriptions or calculations while the children are happily engaged in physical or creative tasks. The outdoor area is not currently sufficiently stimulating for language development but leaders are aware of this and plan to enrich this area with additional resources.
- Phonics is now well taught. Leaders quickly reorganised the system and resources for teaching phonics and reading in the past two years in response to disappointing outcomes. Consequently pupils now enjoy applying their reading skills and select books frequently for reading sessions at home that are then checked by parents, carers and teachers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitudes to learning are good as a result of the warm and supportive relationships established by teachers and other adults in the classroom. Pupils want to live up to their teachers' high expectations, and learners of all ages work cooperatively with each other. Behaviour is good rather than outstanding because attitudes to learning are not exemplary across the school.
- Pupils behave very well outside lessons, interacting constructively with adult helpers. The school is effective in promoting good relationships. Pupils share the extensive and well-maintained playground areas sensibly and safely.
- Pupils take great pride in their well-designed new environment and the striking displays of their work. They talk excitedly of the way that house captains have a say in celebration assemblies and the way that constructive suggestions offered through their school council are taken seriously.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very well looked after by the adults around them and speak appreciatively of the way that the headteacher is 'always at the gate or in the playground'. Pupils have a good awareness of personal safety, including internet, road and fire safety, because it is well covered in lessons.
- Typically, pupils are well mannered. This is because all staff set a good example of being polite and courteous, be it in class or the playground, and pupils quickly respond to this.
- Pupils understand what bullying means and they believe that incidents are rare. They speak of the ways in which they are quickly helped to make up if there are disagreements.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy positive relationships in a secure environment. They have well-established and orderly routines that are supervised by staff who are well trained to cope with any minor mishaps.
- A good range of sports clubs supplements the three physical education lessons provided weekly for every class and this helps to promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Attendance has remained high since the previous inspection and is above the national average because of efficient checking. Exclusions are unnecessary because behaviour management is effective.
- A very large majority of the parents who responded to Parent View believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very pleased with the clubs, the new buildings and the activities that have been provided for them.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and leadership team have developed a focused system for observing learning in lessons and checking pupils' books to drive up standards. This has led to improvements to the quality of teaching and achievement, particularly in the current Years 4 and 6.
- Middle leaders have been trained to take a more active part in checking on achievement. They are effective in identifying pupils who need additional support to prevent them from falling behind.
- Leaders recognised and acted quickly to address the difference in 2013 between standards in reading on the one hand and writing and mathematics on the other. A renewed focus on reading, with additional resources and training for teachers, is now having a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment.
- Systems have been developed to make sure that only those teachers who meet required standards move up the salary scale. The headteacher does not shy away from difficult conversations about teaching performance when these are necessary.
- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and ensure that the children's needs and interests are well met through a variety of activities and topics. Helpful information is given to parents and carers to assist their children to learn outside school hours and parents and carers are included in assessing their children's progress in their 'learning journey' books.
- Provision to encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Pupils reflect on the differences between right and wrong in personal education lessons and a lively citizenship programme that enlists civic and social services to run memorable workshops.
- Pupils raise money for charities, participate in 'eco warrior' challenges and act as junior safety officers for cycling events. The school council makes practical proposals for improvements to the school's facilities. Participation in dance festivals and musical events at the O2 and across London has widened pupils' cultural horizons. Pupils have won local community art and poetry competitions and a 'Cooking with parents' project helps to develop healthy lifestyles. In addition, an annual cultural festival familiarises pupils with different customs and faiths and extends their spiritual understanding.
- The primary school sports funding is being used to engage specialists who are training the class teachers to improve their skills in teaching gymnastics and team games. The funds also support additional clubs for fitness and netball. Pupils' enjoyment of physical education and participation in inter-school competitions have increased as a consequence. The grant has also been used to train pupils as sports leaders to help run their school sports events.
- Effective safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are consistently applied. Leaders promote equal opportunities and are assiduous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- Leaders work successfully with other schools. The school is supported by its partnership with a cluster of local schools for checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader moderates pupil outcomes across the borough. The headteacher has supported the leadership team of another school in the borough.
- The local authority has provided support to this school by running training on effective leadership for governors and for new middle leaders. It formed the partnership alliance of local schools to which the headteacher and other leaders contribute.

■ The governance of the school:

- Members of the governing body know about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in the school. This is because the headteacher's summary reports provide clear information and governors ask challenging questions about pupil outcomes. The governing body is committed to improving its effectiveness further by working with the local authority and national bodies to undertake a focused training programme. Governors have an accurate understanding of

how pupils are performing compared with national standards. They use the published data to compare pupils' performance with national figures. They make regular and frequent visits to the school to satisfy themselves that reported improvements are indeed taking place. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay increases and pupils' progress because they have revised the pay policy. Governors receive summaries of teachers' performance from the headteacher. They are aware of what support has been provided to improve teaching and if there has been any underperformance. Governors check that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups and hold school leaders to account for the impact of the expenditure on pupils' performance. The budget is carefully managed to support the school improvement plan.

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	135588
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	444041

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	465
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Weston
Headteacher	Andrew Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 July 2010
Telephone number	01708 225186
Fax number	01708 224748
Email address	office@branfil.havering.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

