

Selwyn Primary School

Cavendish Road, London, E4 9NG

Inspection dates 8–9 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 make good progress from starting points that are below those typical for their age.
- Standards are continuing to rise by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been a particular improvement in reading this year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress because they are supported by highly skilled teachers.
- The use of some secondary-trained teachers coming into the school provides a good level of challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school. Pupils in different classes receive similarly good quality provision.
- Behaviour is good in class and around the school. Staff care for pupils extremely well and pupils say they feel very safe at school.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding extremely well.
- Pupils benefit greatly from residential visits to France, including the recent trip to the Normandy beaches.
- Inspirational leadership from the executive headteacher has moulded a very strong team of leaders and managers. Together with governors, they have ensured that teaching and achievement have improved rapidly since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Sometimes pupils have too few opportunities to develop their language and speaking skills, for example, by discussing their ideas in depth.
- Teachers do not always expect pupils to respond and act on the advice they give when they mark pupils' work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons, including 19 jointly with the executive headteacher or heads of school.
- Members of the inspection team heard pupils read and, with the heads of school, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and subject materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body including the vice chair and three other governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 34 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to members of the parent council.
- The inspectors considered the 27 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maura Docherty

Additional Inspector

Gillian Bosschaert

Additional Inspector

David Gutmann

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has three classes in each year group, apart from Year 1 which has two.
- Most pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language with some at the early stages of learning the language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children) is very high.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- From September 2013 the school has been federated with Davies Lane Primary School, part of the Tollgate Teaching School Alliance. The schools share an executive headteacher, three heads of school and a governing body.
- The school has a nursery and also caters for two-year olds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their language and speaking skills
 - ensuring pupils act on teachers' advice in their marking so that pupils gain the most benefit from the guidance given.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the nursery with skills at below the levels typical for their age. In the Nursery and Reception classes a focus on developing children's spoken language and writing skills prepares them well for Year 1. Two-year olds settle quickly because the activities are geared precisely to meet their needs.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good. In the Year 1 national phonics check, a high proportion of pupils reached the required standard, a big improvement on 2013.
- There is a rising trend in standards by the end of Year 2, especially in writing, which is above last year's average. Across the school, pupils have plenty of opportunities to write at length in other subjects, such as science, and in topic work.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 2 and standards are rising. Unvalidated test results for Year 6 show that standards in reading and writing are broadly average and standards in mathematics are above average.
- Standards in reading have improved considerably since 2013, when Year 6 pupils were still overcoming a legacy of underachievement from weaker teaching in the past. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and all pupils have a class novel to study in depth.
- As teaching has improved, the number of pupils who are behind where they should be academically has fallen. Now most pupils are at or above national expectations for their age. In most year groups pupils are making good progress over time.
- Standards are rising in mathematics because all teachers are following an agreed calculation policy and showing pupils exactly how to tackle new concepts. They base problems on real-life situations. For example, in enterprise week, pupils had to write a business plan for how they were going to raise money. They learnt about fractions through cutting up pizzas.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress and do much better than such pupils nationally. This is because the school makes a point of using class teachers to support these pupils in the mornings. Some also receive additional help in the afternoon tailored to their specific needs. As a result, many are reaching the same standards as their classmates.
- The large numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, including those at the early stages of learning English, achieve well because teachers plan to meet their particular needs. Teaching assistants are skilled in helping these pupils to access learning. Additional conversation classes help them become confident in speaking English.
- The most able pupils receive extra support from specialist, secondary-trained teachers. This has enabled them to excel. For example, many more pupils reached the highest Level 6 in mathematics this year, a standard normally expected of secondary-age pupils.
- Those pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress like their classmates. Teachers check their progress carefully. Across the school, gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils are closing. In some year groups there is now no gap at all. In 2013 the gaps in attainment between eligible pupils and the others in Year 6 were less than three terms in reading, writing and mathematics, similar to the national picture.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium also benefit from extra activities such as music lessons and art and karate classes to boost their confidence. They are encouraged to go on trips and join clubs and take a full part in the life of the school. Other pupils with specific needs, such as dyslexia, receive good quality specialist help and support which enables them to overcome difficulties.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is much more consistent in quality than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers plan together and make sure all pupils receive the same good quality provision.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes relationships are very positive and children know the classroom routines very well. This gives them the confidence to try out new ideas.
- Teaching is lively across the school and actively engages pupils in their learning. Attractive displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievements. Useful displays of information help to support them as they learn.
- Teachers use approaches which enable pupils to learn well. For example, pupils often share their work with one another and let each other know how they feel they are doing. They also sometimes use prompts to check they have covered everything they were meant to in the lesson. This gives them a clear understanding of their progress. All pupils know what they have to do to reach the next level of attainment and the steps they are making towards it.
- Other approaches lead to effective learning. For example, teachers use visual aids to support pupils' understanding and this helps pupils who speak English as an additional language. When learning about the 1970s, pupils examined 'strange' historical objects that were in common use then, such as a personal cassette player, which helped to make learning more interesting.
- Teaching assistants are well briefed when working with individuals and groups of pupils of all abilities. Pupils with the most needs receive good support, for example, from the class teacher, to help them make as much progress as possible. This strategy is proving very successful.
- Pupils have 'reflection time' to look at the comments in teachers' marking so they follow the advice. Teachers' expectations of how well they use these sessions vary. They do not always check that pupils have made the best use of the advice to further their learning.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their speaking skills, for example, by discussing their ideas together and they may even make brief notes ready for class discussion. This enables them to develop their thoughts and contribute more fully to the class topic. On some occasions, this activity is less productive, for example, when pupils have too little time to reflect deeply enough. Some then sit back and let others do the talking during whole-class sessions. This limits their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have positive attitudes to learning. They take a pride in their work and make sure it is neatly presented. Different groups of pupils mingle harmoniously and work and play together well. They work with concentration. Pupils can explain what they are doing.
- Pupils say teachers help when things go wrong. They report that some isolated incidents of name calling are dealt with effectively. In the main, pupils take responsibility for one another. One pupil commented, 'Everybody has to look after each other.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The inclusion team provides highly effective support for pupils at risk of not doing well and their families. The school can point to individuals who came with behavioural difficulties and have settled very well because of the help they have received.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. They know about different types of bullying and how to keep safe, for example, on the internet. The older pupils all take first-aid courses, which give them useful practical knowledge for coping with emergencies. Some have already put this into practice at home.
- Pupils take on responsibilities as members of the school council, the learning council, 'lunch bunch', eco-warriors and prefects. These give them a say in all aspects of the school, including what goes on at playtimes, in classes, in the canteen and around the school. They raise money for national and local charities. Pupils give their lessons a star rating out of five to feed back to staff how much they got out of them and to identify anything that could have been better.

- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils occasionally become distracted in class and do not apply themselves to their work as well as they should.
- Attendance has risen to be in line with the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and senior leaders pursue excellence and are highly ambitious for the school. The rapid improvements this year show the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Meticulous systems to check pupils' progress and hold teachers to account mean that 'no one slips through the net'. The school is very clear on what it calls its 'non-negotiables' for teachers, setting high minimum standards of teaching and conduct that all must meet. Leaders have a strong vision to see that every individual succeeds and to promote equality for all pupils. They make sure that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- There is excellent support for newly qualified teachers, not only from this school, but from other schools in the borough as well. The school has close links with the University of East London and helps to train its students. Subject and other leaders are given every opportunity to develop and take on responsibilities, both within the school and also to help out at Davies Lane. They are having a positive impact on improving the school's work.
- The management of teachers' performance begins with the headteacher and branches out to senior leaders and all staff. Teachers have challenging targets which can be easily measured.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because the school has no substantial track record of high achievement and teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Leaders work hard to raise pupils' and parents' and carers' aspirations. Trips to Cambridge University, for example, show them what can be possible. The residential visits abroad, for instance to the Normandy beaches in France, broaden pupils' horizons and bring them face to face with the past. They left a book of poems in the chapel of a war cemetery and sought out individual graves of fallen soldiers to gain an insight into their experiences of 70 years ago.
- There are lots of opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills across a wide range of subjects and topics. This work is enhanced by a wealth of visits, visitors and clubs. Pupils produce artwork of a high quality and put on regular musicals. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils performed a version of 'The Little Mermaid' with confidence and panache to a large gathering of admiring parents and carers.
- The school's values of courtesy, care, cooperation, consideration and commitment underpin all its work. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness extremely well. Pupils celebrate their diverse backgrounds, for example, through 'language of the month'.
- The primary school sports premium is spent wisely on coaching, training for staff, a wider variety of sports, more tournaments and opportunities for greater participation in sport by pupils. This is having a beneficial impact on their health and well-being.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and positive about its work. The parent council is actively involved in the school's work, understands data and looks at pupils' work. Parents and carers are kept well informed through termly report cards and a main report in February, which allows enough time for any targets to be met by the summer.
- The local authority provides good support, at the school's request, especially in confirming its judgements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very experienced and very involved in the life of the school. They challenge well. Governors produce detailed reports of their visits to gather first-hand evidence of the school's work. They have a good understanding of pupils' performance, the quality of teaching and how the pay policy works. Teachers are not rewarded unless pupils are doing well. They know how challenging targets are set for all staff. Governors know about the impact of pupil premium spending and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are exemplary.

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	135124
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	431632

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	603
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Marcia Douet
Headteacher	Maureen Okoye (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 September 2012
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