

Fitzjohn's Primary School

86A Fitzjohn's Avenue, London, NW3 6NP

Inspection dates 18–19 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are totally committed to providing equality of opportunity and inclusion for all pupils. This is shared by all staff and the governing body.
- As a result, all groups of pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress in reading and mathematics. Attainment in these subjects is consistently above average.
- Pupils behave well. They feel very safe. The school can demonstrate how those pupils who find learning and working with others difficult make outstanding gains in their personal development. Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Leaders, including governors, know what the school does well and what needs to be done to improve further. This secures continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Teaching is never less than good. Teachers know their pupils well and plan relevant activities which provide the right level of difficulty for all ability groups.
- Pupils' progress is rigorously checked. Those who are not making the progress they should get help very quickly.
- Children make exceptional progress in all areas of learning in the early years.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Progress in writing is not consistently good for all groups of learners. Too few pupils make rapid gains in their learning, particularly the most able.
- Some pupils are ready to get on with their work but are not always able to do so. As a result, these pupils become restless and their learning slows.
- Targets are not always sufficiently demanding. Marking does not always refer to the progress pupils make towards their targets.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current attainment and progress, improvement planning and the use of pupil premium and primary school sports funding. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited 14 lessons, most of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. They looked at pupils' work, sometimes with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils to talk them about their work and what they thought about their school. They also spoke to pupils informally during lessons and at break times. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body who joined the meeting through a telephone conference. A representative from the local authority was also interviewed.
- The team analysed 69 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke briefly with some parents and carers who attended the 'wake up, shake up' session in the morning before registration.
- Inspectors analysed 19 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Mary Hinds, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fitzjohn's Primary is an average-sized school.
- Pupils are from a wide range of ethnic heritages, with approximately a quarter from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much lower than the national average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- A much higher proportion of pupils leave or join the school at other than the usual times.
- Since the previous inspection a number of new leaders and teachers have joined the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more pupils make faster progress, particularly in writing, by:
 - setting targets which are challenging and more sharply focused on pupils' next steps in their learning
 - referring specifically in marking to these targets when providing feedback to pupils and pinpointing precisely what pupils need to do next in their learning
 - giving pupils work when they are ready in order to sustain their full engagement and to maintain a faster pace in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are outstanding role models. Their pursuit of excellence inspires pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers to do their very best for the school community. As a consequence, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving strongly, especially in reading and mathematics. Children in the early years make phenomenal progress.
- Senior leaders have built up a strong and highly effective team of middle leaders. All are totally focused on securing further improvements through rigorous monitoring. This includes checking the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Any potential underachievement is identified and interventions are put in place to boost progress.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness and know what they need to do next to sustain these rapid improvements. Planning is well focused on key priorities, including writing, although the impact of this work has yet to be sustained over time.
- Central to the school's work is the leadership and management of the quality of teaching, which promotes good and sometimes excellent learning. Training and support for staff strengthen teaching and promote staff's confidence to try out new and different ideas. Middle leaders are pivotal in this process, providing coaching and modelling of outstanding practice.
- There is a robust cycle of teacher appraisal. Teachers are set challenging targets based on the progress pupils make. This also includes teaching assistants. Targets are also linked to the Teachers' Standards, the school's priorities and individual needs, identified through a wide range of evidence. As a result, good performance is rewarded and previous underperformance has been tackled robustly.
- The reviewed curriculum has breadth and balance. Teachers carefully plan so that pupils learn and develop new skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their literacy and mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects. The numerous visits and visitors bring learning to life. Leaders use the National Curriculum levels to monitor progress and are considering a new assessment process.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. The diverse cultural background of pupils, the strong relationships and the lack of any discriminatory incidents is a testament to pupils' tolerance and respect for each other. As one pupil said, 'We fall out, we make friends, that's life...' Lessons and assemblies promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values well.
- The local authority has confidence in the school's performance and provides a 'light touch' oversight.
- The primary school sports funding pays for a sport and gymnastics coach who supports teachers to develop their practice. Pupils have more opportunities to enjoy competitive sport and to develop their leadership and cooperative skills, as well as keeping fit and healthy.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are exceptionally well informed. They receive comprehensive, accurate and candid reports from the headteacher. Governors also gather their own information through a formal timetable of activities, including visits to lessons and talking to pupils and parents and carers.
 - As a result, they ask probing and challenging questions of leaders and have deep insight into how well all groups of pupils achieve, including disadvantaged pupils. They know how well the pupil premium funding is used.
 - Governors know how effective teaching is and how good performance is rewarded.
 - Governors relish any training and advice. Most recently this has focused on safeguarding and on analysing pupil progress information. They have a wide variety of skills and are keen to make sure they are used to benefit the school. They have recently undertaken an audit of their skills and have actively sought to appoint new governors to fill potential gaps.
 - They make sure that all statutory arrangements are met, including for safeguarding. Procedures are robust to secure pupils' safety and well-being.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are very motivated to do their best. They enjoy school as their above average attendance shows. They are punctual and join in the early morning exercise with enthusiasm with their parents and carers before registration.

- The harmonious atmosphere pervades all aspects of the school. Staff model expected behaviour and pupils respond positively. They are cooperative and respectful. They are willing to help one another and usually listen carefully to adults and each other. However, in some lessons pupils sometimes become restless. This is because the most-able quickly grasp what they are expected to learn and are eager to get on with their work. However, they sometimes have to wait for their teacher to explain further to those pupils who find learning more difficult.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to think for themselves and to make choices. Occasionally they make mistakes, for example, behaving too boisterously at break time when they think adults cannot see them. Nevertheless, leaders use these occasions as learning points and pupils are genuinely regretful.
- The school can point to significant improvements in the behaviour and emotional well-being of pupils who have previously had difficulty settling into school and/or have challenging behaviour. They are now completely integrated into school life. This is a result of the school's commitment to ensure equality of opportunity for all through specialist support from the school's mentor which is strengthened by effective partnership work with other health professionals.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils talk about lessons that focus on teaching them how to stay safe in different situations, including road safety and keeping safe on the internet.
- Pupils are given regular opportunities to assess and manage risks, including how to use the monkey bars and tree houses appropriately in the playground.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying means and know that it can happen in a variety of ways. They say that there is no bullying at the school. Consequently, pupils say that they feel very safe and have confidence that adults will listen and sort out any problems. Parents, carers and staff agree that pupils behave well, are kept safe and the school's records support this view.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good in all subjects. It is particularly strong in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are confident and fluent readers. They talk articulately about their favourite authors and the most avid readers read at playtime on their electronic devices.
- Teaching engages pupils in their learning because teachers have good subject knowledge and they plan activities which are interesting. Activities are pitched at the right level of challenge for different ability groups, and as a result all groups of pupils make at least good progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of what they expect pupils to achieve and how they should behave. There are strong relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils appreciate appropriate praise for their work and effort because they know it is genuinely deserved. This encourages them to work even harder.
- The recent addition of a science/cookery and drama room and iPads for most Key Stage 2 pupils has extended and enriched pupils' learning experiences. ICT is not only used to enhance the quality of teaching but is an integral learning tool in many lessons. Pupils are exceptionally confident and capable in using ICT to undertake research and to record and present their ideas to others, for example.
- In mathematics the recent focus on resources has secured a greater depth of knowledge of abstract concepts such as ordering fractions. Pupils learn more quickly and are more confident mathematicians.
- Most teaching builds effectively on what pupils already know and can do because teachers assess pupils' progress accurately. This secures a good pace in learning and progress.
- Nevertheless, targets do not always provide pupils with their next steps in learning because sometimes they have already achieved them and/or some targets are not always sufficiently challenging. Equally, marking does not always refer to pupils' targets and it does not consistently provide effective feedback on what pupils need to do to improve. This is particularly so in writing.
- Writing is a key focus for the school and they have already implemented several improvement strategies to boost progress, including better modelling of good writing from adults. This has yet to secure better than expected progress for all groups of learners, although there are clear signs of an upward trend in achievement.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children usually join the Nursery with levels of skills typical for their age and sometimes higher, although they vary from year to year as a result of small numbers. Those children who attend both the Nursery and

Reception make outstanding progress from their starting points. In 2014 almost all children attained at least a good level of development. Children are exceptionally well prepared for Key Stage 1.

- Attainment in Year 6 in 2014 was well above average in mathematics, above average in reading but just below average in writing. Attainment in writing was not as strong because too few pupils achieved the higher levels in this subject. This is also the case to a lesser extent in Year 2 where attainment was just above average in reading and writing and above in mathematics.
- Across Key Stage 2 more pupils join and leave the school than usual. This means that published information about achievement is often skewed by high mobility and by small numbers of pupils in each class. School information shows that from their starting points all pupils make good progress.
- Progress across all year groups is at least good and often better in reading and mathematics. However, progress in writing although good is not consistently so. This is because too few pupils in all ability groups make better than expected progress, especially those who find learning easy.
- More-able pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress in reading and mathematics. In 2014 a higher proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels in reading and mathematics than nationally. Nevertheless, their progress is not always as fast in writing, although the school's most recent information shows that pupils are beginning to catch up.
- Although there are many pupils who speak English as an additional language, they are already fluent in English because their parents and carers are bilingual. The small minority of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English when they join the school quickly become fluent because the school provides intensive support to develop their language skills. These pupils make as much progress as all other pupils.
- In 2014 the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils in the school widened in Year 6. Disadvantaged pupils were almost a year behind in reading, one year and two terms in writing, and over a year in mathematics. There was a similar gap between disadvantaged pupils in this school and all pupils nationally. Likewise, they made less progress than these two groups in writing and mathematics. However, over a quarter of these pupils had significant learning difficulties. School information shows that all other disadvantaged pupils made as much progress as their peers, and their attainment was at least in line with all pupils nationally, in all three subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well in all key subjects. They make as much progress as all other pupils. This is because staff are responsive to their needs, both academically and personally. Their progress is tracked meticulously and support is put in place quickly to boost their achievement and confidence.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Provision in the early years is outstanding. Children choose from a wide range of stimulating and relevant activities which engage them fully in their learning. The classrooms and the outdoor areas are highly stimulating and organised to enable children to make progress in all areas of learning. In the Nursery there is an excellent emphasis on developing children's personal, language and communication, and physical skills.
- Many children have had previous pre-school experience and are already working within the typical age bands for nursery children. They settle quickly into the classroom routines and are eager and ready to learn. Adults assess what children can already do and then plan their next steps on a daily basis. As a result all children make at least good and often outstanding progress from their starting points. They are well prepared to continue to make rapid progress in Year 1.
- Adults are skilled in moving children's progress on at a fast pace. They observe children carefully and intervene when appropriate to extend their understanding in as many areas of learning as they can. Equally they know when to allow children to explore on their own, so that the children can sustain their concentration and develop their resilience in order to complete an activity.
- Children play confidently and creatively together. They investigate and explore cooperatively, sharing and taking turns. In the Reception class four children made a boat with large wooden blocks using a picture to guide them. They instructed each other to get on board the boat, informing an adult, 'We are going to sail across the sea to a treasure island', and then helped each other to 'climb' into the boat.
- The learning environment has many labels and printed words to show children that print has meaning. Adults have extended this by using the children's captions to reinforce this as well as celebrating their achievements.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. They are exceptionally well cared for and feel very safe.
- Parents and carers feel welcome and appreciate the daily opportunities to talk to the staff. They receive

regular updates about their child's progress and how to help their child at home.

- The early years leader is an excellent role model for all staff. As a skilled teacher she shares her expertise and regularly checks the quality of the provision. She provides focused feedback to improve staff's practice, as well as tailored training and development to secure further improvements. As a result, children's achievement has risen dramatically over the last two years.

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	100026
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	448187

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	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Walsh
Headteacher	Rob Earrey
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2009
Telephone number	020 7435 9797
Fax number	NA
Email address	head@fitzjohns.camden.sch.uk

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