

Danebury Avenue, Wandsworth, London, SW15 4PD

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' standards in writing by the end of Year 6 have declined in recent years.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet secured sustained improvements, particularly in writing, because expectations of pupils have not been high enough in the past. This is especially so for the most able pupils.
- Senior leaders check pupils' progress but have only recently increased the frequency of this process and have not yet included middle leaders, such as those in charge of key stages.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good in all year groups. Work is not always set at the right level of difficulty for pupils, slowing their progress.
- Tasks set for the most able pupils are not always challenging enough and as a result they do not make the rapid progress that they could.
- In tests at the end of Year 6 in 2014, progress in writing for several groups of pupils was below the national standards.
- Rates of progress in writing for other year groups in Key Stage 2 are also variable.

The school has the following strengths:

- The provision in the Resource Base is good because teaching is strong and pupils' progress good
- Opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strong and prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and feel extremely safe.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start because they are well taught in the Reception class and make good progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 10 teachers. In addition they observed pupils' activities during breakfast club and at break and lunchtimes.
- One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher who also accompanied inspectors on two additional visits to look at pupils' writing in a series of classes. The deputy headteacher joined an inspector scrutinising pupils' workbooks.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and middle leaders. Discussions took place between an inspector and a representative of the local authority.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to provide evidence for inspectors. However, they took account of 82 responses to a school survey of parents and carers as well as informal discussions and one letter. The views of the staff were taken into account through meetings and consideration of the 19 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choices of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current year as well as previous academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning documents were also examined.
- Other documents scrutinised included records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, behaviour logs and attendance records.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after) is above the national average. About seven in 10 pupils are supported by this additional funding.
- The largest ethnic groups of pupils are made up of those of African and White British heritage. Other sizeable groups include pupils of Other White, Pakistani and Other Black backgrounds..
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well above the national average with about one in four receiving additional support.
- A specialist resource base is provided for up to 20 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Currently there are 18 pupils on roll.
- In 2014, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics
- The early years provision comprises one Nursery and one Reception class. Most children attend on a full-time basis and there is provision for six part-time places.
- Since the school's previous inspection, a new early years coordinator has been appointed. The leader of the Resource Base for pupils with moderate learning difficulties also took up her post after the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching to at least good by making sure that all teachers set higher expectations for the more able pupils and design activities that stretch and challenge them in all subjects.
- Improve achievement in writing for all groups by:
 - using pupils' targets for writing in other subjects, including science and humanities
 - strengthening the practice of checking progress by organising more frequent checks and quickly devising catch-up programmes in writing for any pupils who are falling behind.
- Improve the leadership of teaching by:
 - increasing the involvement of middle leaders in holding class teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes
 - working alongside class teachers to improve the overall quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils are not making consistently good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment has declined in writing since the previous inspection. Attainment in both key stages at the higher levels, for both reading and writing, is significantly below national expectations. In addition, progress in writing for many groups in Key Stage 2 was significantly below national expectations in 2014. Leaders and managers have therefore not been effective enough in ensuring good achievement
 - The dedicated and energetic headteacher and the leadership team have begun to improve upon this, particularly in the most recent checks on progress in the current Year 6 and this shows that there is capacity for improvement. Nonetheless, pupils' progress remains uneven across different classes and some aspects of teaching require improvement.
 - Senior leaders who are subject leaders are involved in training staff and checking pupils' progress in mathematics, reading and writing. However, their actions have not yet made a consistent impact on pupils' progress. Recent changes have been made to teaching in Year 5 aimed at speeding up pupils' progress, but subject leaders are not yet able to show sustained improvements. There are plans, but these have not yet been put into operation to involve more middle leaders more fully in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
 - Checks have been made by senior leaders on pupils' progress but, until very recently, these have not been frequent enough to identify quickly any pupils who need extra help, particularly in writing, because they are at risk of falling behind.
 - Staff performance is managed meticulously and pay rises are only awarded if teachers are successful in enabling pupils to meet their progress targets. The headteacher has not shied away from difficult conversations and tackles underperformance decisively.
 - The school's improvement plan shows that leaders have accurately identified the areas requiring development. New systems for teaching writing are being introduced but it is too early to judge the impact of these new approaches.
 - School leaders are making effective use of additional funding to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, with the most marked impact being in Key Stage 2 in the current Years 4 and 6.
 - The leadership of the Resource Base is effective because the impact of activities on pupils' progress is checked very frequently and plans for individual pupils are adapted to meet their precise needs. The base is welcoming and well resourced with focused professional development provided for all who work there.
 - Strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned in the subjects and activities offered to pupils. Pupils are helped to understand British democratic values because the curriculum includes this. The underpinning values for personal and social education are drawn from the United Nations declaration of the rights of the child and pupils talk enthusiastically about the ways in which these are celebrated in assemblies. Equality is promoted well and discrimination is not tolerated.
 - Reflection upon the moral and social impact of actions is a routine part of lessons. The school council is involved in planning the school's donations to charity. The curriculum widens pupils' cultural horizons with, for example, an international celebration of the different cultures represented among the school's families. Drama performances involve the whole school in a cycle of termly productions and pupils' self-confidence is boosted as a result. Pupils take part in visits, for example to Richmond Park and to a residential in 'Little Canada', and these widen environmental understanding. Different faiths are celebrated and pupils' understanding of these is extended because the school nativity play is augmented on alternate years with a multi-faith presentation.
 - Safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are reviewed regularly. Leaders promote equality and tackle any potential discrimination effectively.
 - The additional government sports funding has been used to train teachers to improve dance and gymnastics lessons and to give pupils additional extra-curricular opportunities. The school is now entering more sports competitions as increased numbers of pupils participate in sports.
 - The local authority assists the school by checking teachers' assessment of work, by supporting senior leaders in their evaluation of teaching and by providing training for governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Members of the governing body know the standards of achievement and teaching in the school. They are asking increasingly probing questions about pupils' performance when leaders report to them. They are aware of the need to improve performance in writing and have recently reorganised themselves so

that each governor monitors a subject and checks on the impact of the school's actions on performance in that subject. The governing body has improved its effectiveness by drawing upon training offered by the local authority. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they use the published data to compare pupils' performance. They recognise the need to update their training for interpreting national published information so that they can hold leaders to account more rigorously. They make visits to the school to make sure that reported improvements are taking place. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay increases and pupils' progress. They are aware of what support has been provided to improve teaching and if there has been any underperformance. Checks are made that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups and governors hold school leaders to account for the impact of the expenditure on pupils' performance. British values of democracy and tolerance are actively promoted because governors check that this is included in the reports that they receive on the curriculum. In addition, they take an active interest in the school council's recommendations for charitable donations from money raised by the parents' association. The governing body welcomes the celebration of families' diverse cultures and festivals by the whole school community. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The budget is carefully managed to support the school improvement plan.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitudes to learning are positive because teachers and other adults encourage them and apply the behaviour policy consistently. Pupils respond well to and value the rewards from the school's 'traffic light' system that 'helps us to think about our behaviour'.
- Pupils cooperate well with each other in lessons. Behaviour is good, rather than outstanding, because it is not exemplary across the school. Pupils' attention can occasionally wander if adults have not set high enough expectations for activities.
- Pupils behave courteously outside classrooms. Older pupils, as peer mentors, take responsibility around the school to help others to behave sensibly and play well together.
- Typically, pupils conduct themselves well around the school. This is because all staff set high expectations. Positive values are emphasised through an emphasis on the responsibilities as well as the rights of the child in personal education lessons.
- The absence rates for those pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly have declined sharply over recent years. This is because of more effective checking and following up of absences with parents and carers. Attendance over the past three years has been better than the national average. Exclusions have not been used because the management of behaviour is increasingly effective.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils speak very appreciatively of the way that they are looked after. The work of the learning mentors, and the 'Place to Be' drop-in centre in responding to any anxieties, are praised highly by the pupils. The swift response to concerns placed by pupils in 'worry boxes' is also valued.
- Pupils have a good awareness of personal safety, including when using the internet, because it is explained well in lessons and assemblies on cyber bullying.
- Pupils understand what bullying means and they say that although it does occur, staff can be relied upon to help them overcome any problems quickly. This is borne out by school records that show decreasing numbers of bullying incidents over the past two years.
- The great majority of the parents and carers who responded to the school's survey or who spoke to inspectors believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment.
- Pupils in the Resource Base are kept very safe and feel secure both in their own base and in movements around the school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not promoted consistently good progress, especially in writing, as a result of some low expectations in the past.
- The school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching shows that some in the past was not good enough to help pupils achieve well. Teaching is now improving as a result of more focused leadership, decisive performance management and support, but pupils are not yet making sustained progress in all year groups and subjects.
- Marking is regular and many teachers make helpful comments on pupils' work, particularly in their English books. However, comments by teachers about what pupils should do next to improve their writing in work in other subjects are not always so detailed.
- Teachers do not always set high expectations for extended writing in subjects such as humanities or science because links with pupils' literacy targets are not clear enough. As a result, progress is variable. For example, in book samples seen by inspectors there were instances where there was an over-reliance on worksheets in these subjects with little opportunity for pupils, particularly the most able, to plan their answers, refer to their personal literacy targets and write in depth. Leaders are aware of this and have made consistent use of literacy targets across subjects a focus for their own book scrutiny activities.
- Tasks in mathematics are designed to challenge the pupils' thinking and to stimulate discussion about how to solve problems. When teachers plan activities at the right level of difficulty for different pupils and set high expectations, then pupils make progress. For example, in a Year 2 activity on number bonds, pupils' enthusiasm was stimulated with chants to emphasise key terms. The teacher's insistence on using full sentences promoted lively discussions among pupils about their proposed answers. Adults asked well-focused questions of smaller groups of pupils to encourage individuals to express themselves in more detail. However, not all teachers are as effective in questioning pupils or promoting progress for all groups in their classes.
- Pupils who find the work difficult benefit from skilful support in class that helps them to make progress. The pupils who are capable of attaining higher levels are sometimes set extension challenges but these are not always hard enough to stretch their capabilities, nor do the more able pupils always have time to answer these questions in depth.
- Pupils in the Resource Base are well taught because their confidence is developed by teachers making their expectations extremely clear and using stimulating resources to encourage pupils to complete activities successfully.
- Reading is encouraged across all year groups. Leaders have provided well-equipped reading areas and a cosy library to help pupils select books for reading sessions in school and at home. Pupils' reading is then checked weekly by adults in detailed record books. Lessons for comprehension skills are now explicitly scheduled and this is helping to improve standards. For example, in Year 2, the more able pupils are challenged to use ambitious texts to enliven their own stories. Nonetheless, few pupils attain the highest levels by the end of Key Stage 2.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is not good because in recent years attainment and progress in writing for many groups of pupils fell well below the national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The school's own records show that rates of progress in other Key Stage 2 year groups are variable. This is because recent changes aimed to compensate for a legacy of expectations that were not high enough have not yet made a consistent impact on pupils' achievement.
- The achievement of the most able is not yet good. More-able pupils in the current Year 6 are now making better progress, given their starting points, in reading although not yet in writing and mathematics. However, in Year 4 and Year 5 fewer of the more able pupils are making good progress. There is not yet enough emphasis on giving hard work in a range of subjects to the more able pupils in these year groups to help them attain the highest levels.
- School records show that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in the main school are making similar progress to that of their classmates. These pupils receive good quality support from staff in some lessons but this is not yet having a strong enough impact to lead to good achievement.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups make similar progress to their classmates as do those for whom English is an additional language. Specialist support helps these pupils to develop their language skills.
- The progress of pupils in the Resource Base is good, from their different starting points, because these

pupils are well taught and their progress is carefully checked by leaders who make sure that no pupil falls behind.

- Additional government funding is used to run small-group activities for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, the funds were used effectively because while the disadvantaged pupils were over a year behind pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics, the gap in the school between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates had been reversed and disadvantaged pupils attained higher levels than their peers in the school. School records show that in the current Years 6 and 4 the funds have been used particularly effectively because gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates have disappeared in all subjects.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are generally well below the levels typical of three- and four-year-olds. As a result of good teaching in Reception, in recent years above-average proportions have achieved good levels of development by the end of the Reception Year. Children are well prepared to begin Year 1. This represents good progress.
- Parents and carers are visited before their children enrol and are encouraged to help their children learn, for example, by joining the reading corner before school starts.
- Children behave well because they quickly respond to the routines established by experienced staff who help to reinforce positive conduct.
- Staff help children make good progress through a range of stimulating activities. Questioning is used effectively to help children develop their powers of self-expression and answer in full sentences. The linking of sounds to letters (phonics) is well taught in Reception and enables children to make good progress in reading.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good because teaching and support for children are effective. Senior leaders are aware of the need to provide training for the teaching of phonics in the Nursery and plans have been made to change the organisation of phonics teaching in the new year.

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	101033
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	443949

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	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Carpenter
Headteacher	Ruth Hudson
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 December 2010
Telephone number	020 8876 8482
Fax number	020 8878 1513
Email address	admin@thealton.wandsworth.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

