

# Walker Primary School

Waterfall Road, London, N14 7EG

**Inspection dates** 30 September–1 October 2014

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Outstanding | 1        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Early years provision          |                      | Good        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children learn quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and do especially well in reading and personal development.
- Pupils achieve well across the school, especially in reading and mathematics, and attainment is above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have a thirst for learning and are keen to try hard.
- Pupils cover a wide range of subjects and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports them well in their learning and relationships.
- The school's work to keep the pupils safe is outstanding and consequently pupils feel very safe and stay safe at school.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and provide pupils with interesting lessons that help them to learn quickly. New systems are in place to check up on how well the pupils are doing.
- Leaders are improving the school following a dip in pupils' progress in writing.
- Leadership and management, including by governors, is having a positive impact on teaching and pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Middle leaders have not been trained to check that all groups of pupils are doing equally well and dips in achievement are avoided.
- Pupils, especially the most able, are not always clear what they are to achieve in each lesson, and not enough is expected of them in writing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils and three members of the governing body. A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account the 66 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and held informal discussions with a random sample of parents and carers.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in the survey responses from 18 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.
- At the time of the inspection some of the children in the Reception classes were in their first week at school.

## Inspection team

|                                  |                      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Jim Eshelby                      | Additional Inspector |
| Peter Lacey-Hastings             | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Walker Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There are two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after, is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- An above average proportion of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language, although only a few are at the early stages of learning to speak English. These pupils speak various first languages.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been many changes in governors and staffing over the past two years, including senior leaders. The headteacher joined the school in September 2014 and had been at the school for three weeks at the time of the inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of middle leaders on pupils' progress, by ensuring that they:
  - are fully trained in their responsibilities
  - use information on how well groups of pupils are doing to halt dips in achievement as soon as they arise.
- Enhance teaching and achievement in writing for the most able pupils, by:
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve in each lesson
  - providing pupils with clearer guidance on what they are expected to learn.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management of the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are good. The headteacher and the governing body have a realistic understanding of what needs to be done next to make sure that the school is outstanding. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection, such as outdoor provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage and support for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language, have been tackled successfully.
  - Provision is in place to rectify the 2013 dip in achievement in writing, although achievement in this subject remains less secure than in reading and mathematics. While pupils have developed a good grounding in spelling, grammar and punctuation, they are not consistently expected to make good use of what they have learned in their writing.
  - The budget is spent wisely. For example, new equipment for communication technology is being used well in lessons to support the pupils' learning.
  - Procedures for making teaching even better are in place and are successful in bringing about agreed approaches to teaching, such as marking. Members of staff are given helpful guidance on how to improve, and training is provided as needed. Checks on teachers' performance are to be linked to salary progression, although links to pupils' progress are not always sharply focused. This is because information on how well groups of pupils are doing is not clear enough to be easily analysed.
  - Middle leaders are enthusiastic about moving the school forward, but are new to their roles in checking up on the learning of various groups in the school. As they have not been trained they find it difficult to interpret the wealth of new information on how well pupils are doing
  - The school is well advanced in developing the new plans for teaching all subjects and provides many extra activities to help bring pupils' learning to life. For example, good provision is made for literacy and numeracy so that pupils are prepared well for the next steps in education.
  - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils have a very good understanding about how their behaviour affects others and how they can help each other. Leaders, including governors, promote a clear set of values such as unity, and respect and tolerance for various cultures and beliefs. These values help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
  - Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Adults working in school are fully trained in caring for the pupils and checked for their suitability. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and effective.
  - Pupils who are eligible for additional funding receive good support for their differing needs. For example, funding supports learning and provides access to additional provision such as individual music lessons. Pupils who receive additional funding are supported well so that they catch up with the other pupils by the end of Year 6.
  - The special funding to improve physical education and sport has been spent on a specialist football coach, extra clubs and staff training. Pupils are more involved in sporting activities than in the past, and this contributes well towards their healthy lifestyles.
  - Most parents and carers are pleased with the school, especially that their children are happy and feel safe. They make positive comments such as, 'Teachers want to do the best for the children' and 'I like the community feel.'
  - The local authority has provided an appropriate light touch support for this school. Leaders are seeking to be more outward looking so that expertise can be shared between schools in the area.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governance has improved quickly in the last few years. Governors are knowledgeable about what works well, what needs to be done next and how well the school compares with others. Consequently, they provide a good level of support and challenge for school leaders. Governors understand the arrangements for checking up on teaching, helping teachers to improve and how good teaching is to be rewarded. They make sure that additional funding is spent well supporting pupils' learning and that statutory duties are carried out.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable in class, around the cramped

school building and on the playground. They are exceptionally polite and courteous and most parents, carers and pupils agree that behaviour is a strength.

- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning and as a result work very hard in lessons. As one pupil said, 'It gets your brain really working.' They are keen to help one another and work well with their talk partners. Their above average rates of attendance show that they are keen not to miss school.
- They help to devise classroom rules and consequently have a very good understanding of the importance of behaving sensibly. Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have for taking responsibility at school and take their roles as school or eco councillors very seriously. For example, they were proud to be able to explain their role in selecting equipment for the adventure playground.
- Discrimination of any kind is successfully discouraged. Pupils from various backgrounds get on together very well and show each other respect. Unkind or bullying behaviour is very rare and mostly dealt with to the satisfaction of pupils and their parents and carers. The school is working with the very few pupils who find it difficult to play considerately with others. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the various forms of bullying and why they are wrong.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel safe at school and know how to stay safe, including when using the internet.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about topics such as road safety because some pupils are 'road rangers' who are trained to provide advice for others.
- Pupils look after school equipment carefully and are aware of the need to look out for the safety of others at the school. For example, when out at play, pupils are aware of the need to play safely when taking part in running and chasing games.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Enthusiastic teachers are successful in motivating the pupils to want to learn. They work together well across year groups planning interesting topics. Communication technology helps make lessons enjoyable. For example, in history in Year 5, pupils enjoyed watching video clips as a way of learning how the Vikings lived.
- Members of staff form good relationships with the pupils and consequently they manage behaviour positively.
- Teachers share good subject knowledge with the pupils and provide clear explanations for the tasks they want the pupils to complete. Pupils respond well to questions which check their knowledge and understanding. They find that the work in reading and mathematics provides the right amount of challenge.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support when working with small groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They also help to explain new vocabulary to those who are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- In writing, pupils are taught all the right skills to support their written work, but teachers do not always have high enough expectations for what they expect pupils of differing ability to achieve in a lesson. As a result, the most able in particular are not consistently challenged to do their best.
- Marking is thorough and successfully picks up pupils' mistakes. It moves learning forward well in mathematics. However it does not always involve pupils enough, especially the most able, to make sure that they consistently improve their writing.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment is above average by the time children join Year 1. All groups of pupils achieve well over time, leading to above average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils' good progress in developing literacy and numeracy supports their learning in other subjects well and prepares them for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils make the best progress in reading and mathematics. All pupils get off to a good start with their reading and achieve above average results in the Year 1 phonics (sounds and letters) screening check.
- The most able pupils do equally well in reading and mathematics. In writing, pupils learn the skills for writing such as spelling, grammar and punctuation effectively, but are not always given enough guidance in each lesson so that they are clear about what they should be aiming for. Consequently, not all pupils, especially the most able, do their best work in this subject and at times their written work is of a

similar standard as the other pupils’.

- Leaders have identified and are rectifying the dip in progress in writing, and while it is improving, writing remains less strong than other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. The school has a wealth of additional support groups for these pupils and extra help in lessons. Like other pupils, their achievement in writing lags behind that in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language do so quickly. Pupils are keen to help each other and there are good opportunities for pupils to speak and listen. They receive additional support in lessons so that new vocabulary can be explained as they work.
- The school promotes equal opportunities successfully. The attainment of pupils eligible for additional funding is similar to that of other pupils. In 2013, they were about a term behind other pupils at the school in mathematics but compared favourably with them in reading and writing. Their attainment exceeded that of all pupils nationally.
- The school’s provision to develop pupils’ physical well-being is enabling them to reach the levels of which they are capable. For example, there has been an increased interest from the pupils in joining sports clubs. In gymnastics lessons in Years 3 and 5, pupils are able to demonstrate their new balancing skills.
- Pupils’ exceptionally positive attitudes towards learning contribute strongly to the rapid progress they make over time.

### The early years provision

is good

- Most children are working within the levels typical for their age when they join the Reception classes. Children of differing abilities make good progress and achieve well, especially in reading and personal development. For example, children were already learning about getting on with others and how to help tidy up. As one child politely asked another, ‘Is it my turn?’
- Children settle into school quickly and happily. Members of staff form strong relationships with the children and encourage them to be independent. Consequently, only days after joining the school, children are making sensible choices about their learning.
- Children are kept safe and healthy. Members of staff are trained in looking after young children and are successful in encouraging them to develop self-help skills such as dressing properly.
- Teaching is good because the children’s interests and concentration are harnessed well. Children are given a wide variety of inviting activities indoors and outside. For example, during the inspection pupils were enjoying preparing for ‘Mr Bear’s’ birthday party by making their own party hats, writing birthday cards and counting candles for his birthday cake.
- Effective leadership ensures members of staff make a thorough check on how well children are doing through observations of the children at work and by asking questions. However, sometimes these questions are too easy and do not extend the children’s learning further. Leaders are rightly looking at ways that they can make sure that their judgements on how well children are doing are consistent with judgements made in other local schools.

## 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

|                                |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 102007  |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Enfield |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 449437  |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                           |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                              |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                             |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 422                               |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Phillip Dawson                    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Jennifer Malone                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 22 February 2007                  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 8886 3904                     |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 020 8882 4406                     |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | headteacher@walker.enfield.sch.uk |



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