

Aldersbrook Primary School

Harpenden Road, London, E12 5HL

Inspection dates 2–3 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her drive, enthusiasm and ambition for the pupils in the school have been key to the school's rapid improvement over the past two years.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They experience outstanding teaching in a stimulating environment.
- Standards have risen rapidly over the past few years, and are above average. More pupils are now attaining the higher levels by the end of Year 6, especially in writing and mathematics. They are well prepared for secondary school.
- Most pupils of all abilities make exceptional progress because teaching is consistently good, and often outstanding. Expectations are very high and relationships with pupils are a real strength. Pupils benefit from teachers' secure subject knowledge, excellent behaviour management and regular feedback.
- Other adults make an effective contribution to pupils' learning through support in the classroom and with small groups.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Their behaviour is exemplary both inside and outside of the classrooms. They feel very safe and their knowledge of how to keep themselves safe is impressive. They have very positive attitudes towards learning.
- The school provides extremely well for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. Pupils experience a wide range of vibrant learning opportunities. There is a strong focus on creative subjects as well as on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).
- School leaders and governors have maintained a firm focus on raising standards through improving the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils.
- Governors are highly skilled and closely involved in the life of the school. They are knowledgeable and provide effective support. They hold leaders to account and have been instrumental in driving the school forward.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff, who are loyal and appreciate the exceptional opportunities for training and development. Middle leaders make a valuable contribution to raising standards in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all 28 classes. Ten of these were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils both informally and formally. They heard pupils read and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents, including the 117 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. They also talked to several parents before school and considered the views of staff, expressed in 30 inspection questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority's advisory service and members of the governing body, including the Chair and vice-chair. Inspectors also held discussions with members of the senior and extended leadership teams, and other staff.
- Inspectors examined information on pupils' progress and the work of a randomly selected group of pupils, including those who are supported by additional government funding. They also looked at records of learning of children in the Nursery and Reception. Other school documentation which was considered included the school's own self-evaluation and development planning, the minutes of governors' meetings and information on pupils' achievement. Behaviour logs, policies and information relating to child protection and safeguarding, were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Teresa Davies

Additional Inspector

Larissa James

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- Just over two thirds of pupils belong to a range of minority ethnic groups. Of these two fifths speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below the national average.
- There are three classes in Reception Year and one in the Nursery Year. Children attend the Nursery part-time.
- Approximately one in five pupils are eligible for support through pupil premium funding. This is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals or are children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved the Basic Skills award for the Early Years Foundation Stage. It has developed close working links with other schools in the local area and provides support to a group of schools in a neighbouring authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase rates of progress in reading across Key Stage 2 so that more pupils attain standards that are as high as those in other subjects.
- Ensure that the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school is closed securely.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is an extremely effective leader. She has established a culture of high expectations for staff and pupils. There is an extremely strong sense of teamwork and loyalty among staff which has contributed towards the rapid improvements in recent years.
- The exceptionally effective deputy headteacher and other senior leaders have also played a pivotal role in improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement significantly.
- The school knows itself well and has identified the correct priorities. For example, through the ongoing analysis of pupils' progress, leaders identified that progress in reading was not as swift as that seen in mathematics and writing. Consequently, the opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills have been enhanced. Current school information indicates that there is a positive impact on pupils' achievement in reading.
- Middle leaders play an invaluable role in driving forward improvements in their areas of responsibility. They are skilled at providing support and training for staff and keep a careful watch on the progress pupils make across the school.
- Through regular meetings about individual pupils and analysis of attainment and progress, staff identify those that need additional help. Pupils particularly value the 'Very Important Pupil' (VIP) system. This involves every pupil, throughout the year having quality time to discuss their progress and work with a senior member of staff. This individual feedback on pupil progress has contributed towards the increasing achievement across the school.
- Senior leaders regularly observe all aspects of teaching both formally and informally. They take prompt and effective action when teaching falls below their expected high standards. The impressive opportunities for training and development are linked closely to both the school's development plan and individual training needs. They ensure that newly qualified teachers are very well supported. The school has developed good links with local schools and works with them to make sure assessments are accurate.
- The arrangements for setting targets for teachers are rigorous and challenging. Recommendations for pay increases are evaluated robustly against individual targets, lesson observation outcomes and specific measures of pupils' progress.
- All pupils are valued within the school community. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from well-organised support by experienced teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. The way that the school promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relations and tackles discrimination is exemplary.
- Systems in the school for all aspects of its work are rigorous and well documented. There are clear expectations for teaching and behaviour management, which are applied consistently. Pupils are very aware of the expectations for behaviour and respond immediately to any signals given by adults that they need to change what they are doing.
- Parents are highly positive about the school's impact on their children's learning and well-being. They have numerous opportunities to be involved in their children's education. This includes workshops to enhance their skills in supporting their child's learning at home, and regular feedback on their child's progress. There is a clear homework policy which encourages parents to be involved in their children's learning through, for example, researching topics together that are to be studied in school.
- The school provides pupils with a rich range of subjects with a strong focus on creative activities. It meets the needs of the National Curriculum and this information is shared with parents via the school website. Music and art feature strongly throughout the school. For example, pupils sing with great enthusiasm in the 'singing assemblies'. Staff organise a very good range of clubs and activities after school. These include opportunities for pupils to spend time away from home and develop their confidence and independence through 'class sleepovers'. The newly introduced 'Curiosity Shop' on Friday afternoons gives pupils an opportunity to choose from a range of activities. This further enriches the curriculum on offer and extends pupils' learning experiences.
- The way that the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength. All of the school's work encourages tolerance of others and responsibility and promotes an excellent understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about and celebrate different cultures and faiths. They relish opportunities to help their peers and adults through the opportunity to be 'ambassadors' for the school. They learn about democracy through school elections onto the effective school council and through visits, for example to the Houses of Parliament.
- School leaders are very aware of the need to close the gap for disadvantaged pupils. Government funding is used carefully to ensure that all eligible pupils benefit. Leaders reviewed their approach last year and, as

a priority, to close the gap more quickly, have employed a 'pupil premium' teacher. This teacher works specifically with eligible pupils and school information indicates is already having a positive impact.

- The local authority is very positive about the way that the school is led and managed and provides 'light touch' support. School leaders regularly seek external advice in order to gain an objective view about the school's performance, to help validate judgements and to moderate teachers' assessments. Also, the headteacher has been invited to work with a number of schools in a neighbouring authority.
- The sports funding is used very effectively to increase the opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of sports as well as providing specialist coaching and training. The school monitors closely the take-up by pupils of the different sporting activities to ensure that as many as possible are benefiting from the opportunities available. Impact of the use of the funding can be seen in the improvement in the quality of PE teaching and the increasing success of the school in local competitive sporting events.
- Arrangements to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils are excellent. All statutory requirements are fully met and senior staff ensure that policies and procedures are rigorous and robust.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a highly accurate understanding of the information about the school's performance and how it compares with those of schools nationally. As a result, they know how well pupils are learning and the quality of teaching. Since the previous inspection they have evolved into a highly effective and professional group who provide a good balance of support and challenge. Governors have a breadth of experience and regularly update their skills, for example by attending safeguarding and safer recruitment training. They visit the school regularly to check how well it is doing, for example by meeting teachers, talking to pupils and looking at pupils' books. They ensure safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements. Governors oversee the way that the performance of staff is managed and reviewed, and know how underperformance is tackled. They help to ensure that there is a clear link between pay increase and teaching performance. They set the headteacher challenging targets. They ensure that the school's financial requirements are well managed, and they check on the impact of additional government funding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding because teachers and other adults set very high standards which are rigorously upheld. Parents, staff and pupils agree. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards their learning. They are highly motivated whatever the subject or task and engage enthusiastically in lessons. Expectations for the presentation and quality of work are high. Pupils take a great deal of pride in their work. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive; as a result, pupils produce work and behaviour of a high standard.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They wear their uniform with pride and look after their surroundings very well indeed, ensuring, for example, that these are litter and graffiti free.
- Older pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved in recent years. This is because lessons are interesting and the systems that are used to help them behave well are fair and consistently used. Around the building and in the playground, pupils' behaviour towards each other is exemplary. Playtimes are harmonious and pupils from all backgrounds get on really well with each other.
- Staff are skilled at ensuring all pupils are learning in lessons at all times and that any inattentive behaviour is very rare. Good routines which promote good listening skills are promoted and built upon from the Nursery. Pupils are very enthusiastic and very keen to learn across the school.
- Attendance is improving over time and is now above average, reflecting the enjoyment that pupils feel in coming to school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All of the parents who responded to the online Parent View survey agreed that their children are safe in school. Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and in other situations, such as road safety.
- The school has a comprehensive programme of opportunities to ensure that pupils are very aware of the different types of bullying. Pupils say that it is rare for bullying to occur and are adamant that if there are any incidents, they are dealt with swiftly and appropriately by staff. Pupils feel that there is always someone they can ask for help and advice if they need to.

- School leaders hold a weekly safeguarding meeting to ensure a constant watchful eye over pupils' well-being. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that there is a quick and effective response to any concerns.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is at least good, and often outstanding, throughout the school. Relationships with pupils are a strength and there is an excellent level of mutual respect and trust. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour which impact very positively on pupils' learning and their excellent achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers skilfully plan work to make sure the needs of all ability groups are challenged. Pupils who need more individual attention are taught very effectively in small groups or given one-to-one help in the classroom.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support inside and outside of lessons. They are well briefed about their role and ensure that all pupils are clear about what they are doing. Through pertinent questions, they help pupils, including those with a disability or special educational needs, to make similar progress to their peers.
- Teachers have excellent knowledge of the subjects they teach. They use questioning effectively, both to make pupils think hard about their learning and to check their understanding. Pupils respond well to opportunities to discuss their ideas with their peers and work very well with their partners or in small groups.
- The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is introduced from the Nursery. Children make great strides as they move into Years 1 and 2, because of the very skilful teaching. Even the weakest readers persevere when trying to sound out unfamiliar words using their phonics knowledge.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talking about books. To ensure that rates of progress are as high in reading as those seen in writing and mathematics, leaders have recently reviewed the opportunities that pupils have to read across the school. They have changed the way that reading lessons are organised. The content is more challenging. This is beginning to ensure that the progress in reading is accelerating across the school.
- The most able pupils are often set more demanding work than other pupils and they relish the challenge. Leaders have introduced a system of 'Golden Tickets' as the strategy for providing additional challenge for more able learners. Pupils work enthusiastically in a group to solve the problems set and make rapid progress in their learning. Teachers encourage pupils to develop resilience and take responsibility for their learning. Pupils told inspectors that teachers encourage them to try hard tasks and that it is acceptable to get things wrong because they learn from their mistakes.
- Marking is of a high standard. Teachers check pupils' written regularly in all subjects and provide feedback in the form of encouraging comments and areas for improvement. The majority of pupils read and respond to the comments by making corrections. They try additional challenge or rewriting pieces of work.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are often below those that are typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. Since the last inspection, the much improved provision has ensured that all children are helped to settle quickly and soon make rapid progress. As a result, children are now well prepared for Year 1.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2014 was broadly in line with the national average and pupils made at least good progress from their low starting points. Currently, school information indicates that pupils are making more rapid progress across Key Stage 1 in all subjects and are on track to achieve standards well above the national average.
- Pupils attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been significantly above the national average for the last three years. At the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils attainment overall was almost two terms ahead of the national average. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is particularly impressive. The most able pupils make particularly fast progress.
- Pupils rates of progress throughout Key Stage 2 has been significantly above the national average for the last two years. A similar proportion to the national average make good progress in reading, with twice as many doing so in writing and mathematics.
- About one in four pupils are deemed to be more able. In 2014, they achieved especially well, gaining the higher levels in all subjects. In 2014, a greater proportion than seen nationally achieved the higher levels

in reading at the end of Key Stage 1. There was similar high achievement in writing and mathematics at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

- By the end of Year 1, all groups of pupils read to a high standard. The proportion achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been above the national average for the last two years. Younger pupils demonstrate that they have good strategies for working out how to read words they have not previously seen and say they enjoy the daily opportunities to read to an adult.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils' attainment in reading was above the national average. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels was not as high as in writing and mathematics. As a result of actions by leaders, progress is accelerating and school information indicates that an increased proportion are on track to attain the higher levels in 2015.
- The most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 are also benefitting from the way reading lessons are now organised and are currently making faster progress. An increasing proportion are on track to attain the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' individual learning needs are quickly identified by teachers, and effective additional help and support are provided swiftly. Consequently, all groups of pupils are making at least good and often exceptional progress. This includes all minority ethnic groups represented in the school and those learning English as an additional language. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make at least the same progress as their peers throughout the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils, eligible for support through the pupil premium, make better progress than all pupils nationally. In 2014 at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils also attained higher levels than all pupils nationally in mathematics and writing although they were a term and a half behind in reading. However, in school there was a gap of two terms in reading, writing, mathematics and spelling, grammar and punctuation.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children make excellent progress in both the Nursery and Reception because the quality of teaching is never less than good and much is outstanding.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is well above the national average and has been for the last two years. In addition, a large proportion of pupils exceed the early learning goals in reading, writing and numeracy. Consequently, children are exceptionally well prepared to move into Year 1.
- Children are keen to learn and parents are encouraged to support their children's learning. The communication with parents is excellent and parents feel fully informed of how their child is progressing.
- Children feel safe and show mature attitudes to their learning. Routines are well rehearsed and pupils are encouraged to be independent and expected to take responsibility. For example children in the Nursery were observed putting on their own coats and cleaning up after they had finished their task. Teachers' expectations are very high and children quickly learn what good listening and sitting look like. As a consequence, little learning time is wasted.
- The wide range of activities, especially in the outdoor area, are carefully selected to cover all areas of learning. They provide many opportunities for children to practise and apply their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well with small groups and individuals, modelling the behaviour and attitudes expected of children. The calm manner in which adults and children relate to each other creates a positive and caring atmosphere for concentrating on learning.
- The early years stage is extremely well led and managed. The leader is highly skilled and is constantly seeking to improve provision for the children. She ensures that assessments are accurate and provide staff with the information they need to plan effectively for the next steps in children's learning. Staff value the many opportunities for additional training to develop their skills as early years practitioners. The leader supports other schools in the local authority in ensuring that their assessments are accurate.

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	102823
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	442151

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	641
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lady Tracey Adebawale-Jones
Headteacher	Misbah Mann
Date of previous school inspection	31 January–1 February 2013
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