

Bessemer Grange Primary School

Dylways, London, SE5 8HP

Inspection dates 10–11 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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.

- The headteacher, together with highly committed and skilled leaders, managers and governors, has brought about significant improvements in many aspects of the school's work since the last inspection. All leaders are highly ambitious for the success of all pupils in the school.
- Governors and leaders have put rigorous systems in place to check the quality of teaching and progress in learning. As a result, teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Standards are improving, and by the end of Year 6, in 2014, pupils' attainment was well above the national average. Current pupils' progress is at least good in reading, mathematics and writing. Year 6 and Year 2 pupils are on track to do well in this year's national tests.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Their high expectations ensure that pupils work hard so that they make good progress across the school.
- Children get off to a very good start in the early years. They experience outstanding teaching in a stimulating and well-planned environment.
- Other adults make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. Consequently, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good, and sometimes exceptional, progress from their different starting points.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school and enthusiastic about their learning, which contributes strongly to their progress. Pupils are very aware of how to keep safe. Pastoral care is a very strong feature.
- The school provides extremely well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils experience a wide range of vibrant learning opportunities inside and outside school.
- Teamwork is very strong. All staff work extremely well together and share the leadership team's vision for continued improvement.
- Middle leaders make a very strong contribution to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They are kept well informed about how well their children are learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Until recently, too few pupils have attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Some teachers do not always ensure that the most able are appropriately challenged.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 22 lessons. Six of these were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils both informally and formally. They heard younger pupils read and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents, including the 145 responses to the online, Parent View, questionnaire. They also talked to parents before school and considered two letters that were sent to them from parents of children currently in Nursery and Reception. Inspectors considered the views of staff expressed in 41 responses to the inspection questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority’s advisory service, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members. Inspectors held meetings 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. They also looked at records of learning of children in the Nursery and Reception. Other school documentation considered included: the school’s self-evaluation and development planning; the minutes of governing body meetings; and information on pupils’ achievement. Behaviour logs, policies and information relating to child protection and safeguarding were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Bowles	Additional Inspector
David Milligan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-sized primary school which is going through a process of expansion.
- Just under three quarters of the pupils belong to minority ethnic groups and just above one quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language. These proportions are higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- There are three classes in the Reception Year, which children attend full time, and two in the Nursery Year. All of the children attend the Nursery part time.
- Approximately two fifths of all pupils are eligible for support through pupil premium funding. This is above 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 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In September 2013, the school welcomed six new teachers to the school. The senior management team was extended to include five assistant headteachers. This increase in staffing was due to the ongoing expansion of the school to three forms of entry. There was a much-reduced turnover of staff in September 2014. Currently, there is one newly qualified teacher in the school.
- The assistant headteacher in charge of the Nursery and Reception Years is a leading teacher for early years provision. The school provides support for local schools with the development of their early years provision and to share the success of their intervention programmes for vulnerable pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement further so that a greater proportion attains higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in Key Stage 1, by making sure that:
 - teachers check pupils' learning throughout the lessons so that they can intervene in a timely manner and adjust activities to ensure that pupils are challenged appropriately
 - making sure that all teachers fully stretch the most able pupils so that work is at the right level of difficulty in order for them to achieve well.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and governors are highly ambitious for the school. Their commitment and quest for excellence have led to a strong improvement during a period of change and expansion, both in terms of pupil numbers and staffing. An outstanding commitment by all the staff to making the school as good as possible means that it is exceptionally well placed to improve even further.
- Senior leaders have an in-depth and accurate understanding of the school's performance. They analyse information about pupils' attainment and progress regularly and in detail. Leaders use the findings to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities and to identify what needs to be developed next.
- The strategies they have implemented to respond to underachievement in Key Stage 1 and to that of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils have been highly successful. As a result, these pupils are currently making good, and sometimes exceptional, progress. The way that the school promotes equal opportunities, fosters good relations and tackles discrimination is exemplary.
- The headteacher is rigorous in managing teachers' performance. Leaders' relentless focus on improving teaching and learning is one of the main reasons why teaching and pupils' achievement have improved so much in Key Stage 1. There are regular detailed checks on teachers' work and excellent opportunities for teachers to undertake training which is linked to their individual developmental needs and the school's development plan. Newly qualified teachers and those early in their careers are particularly well supported.
- Moderation of teacher assessments of pupils' work is rigorous and robust. Leaders regularly scrutinise pupils' workbooks and there are many opportunities for teachers to meet formally and informally to check the accuracy of their assessments. In addition, the school has been supported by the local authority and a local outstanding school in this aspect of its work.
- The leadership of the different aspects of the school's work is very strong. This includes the leadership of special educational needs. Pupils with a disability or special educational needs benefit from very well-organised and focused programmes of support, delivered by experienced teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. Leaders of the early years and creativity are also making a significant impact on pupils' achievement across the school.
- Other leaders with responsibilities, including middle leaders, are also very effective. They make a strong contribution to improving the quality of teaching through monitoring teachers' plans, pupils' work and supporting colleagues in lessons.
- The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. It is broad and balanced, encourages a love of learning and gives pupils memorable experiences which build upon their interests and aspirations. The way the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is a real strength. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and this, with a high level of tolerance and respect, ensures that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The excellent art and creative work displayed around the school and observed in pupils' books shows the wide range of skills being taught. The high focus on creativity has impacted very positively on the improving quality of pupils' reading and writing across the school.
- The school is using its sport funds wisely and effectively on additional coaching for pupils and training for staff. It has facilitated an enhanced and well supported range of sporting clubs and activities available to pupils after school. As a consequence, there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching in physical education lessons and an increased success by the school in local sporting tournaments.
- School leaders reviewed the way that they spent the pupil premium funding last year, in order to ensure that the in-school gap in attainment closes at a faster rate. They introduced two interventions which focus on intensive support for behaviour and improving basic skills. School information shows that, since September, these pupils are now making at least good progress across the school, and the gap in attainment between them and other pupils in school is closing rapidly.
- The local authority has a very positive view of the way the school is led and managed and provides light touch support. It increasingly uses senior leaders from the school in promoting improvement in other schools. The most effective teachers have also begun to take part in this too, including those from the early years and those responsible for creativity. The school has also shared its success in supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils.
- Parents rate the school very highly. They were eager to share their positive views with inspectors during the inspection. Excellent and increasingly successful efforts are made to engage all parents in the life of the school and in how to support their children's learning at home.
- Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and robust. They fully meet all requirements and are highly

effective in keeping pupils safe. Staff members and the governing body are well trained and up to date in child protection and safer recruitment.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body shares the headteacher's vision and high aspirations for the school. Governors provide a very effective balance of support and challenge. They bring an excellent breadth of experience and skill to the leadership of the school. They ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. Governors keep up to date through regular training, for example in the use of statistics and safeguarding. They are knowledgeable about all aspects of the school, including the quality of teaching and pupils' academic performance through the information provided by school leaders, as well as their own visits. Governors hold leaders effectively to account. They oversee the way that the performance of staff is managed and reviewed, and know how underperformance is tackled. They set the headteacher challenging targets and help to ensure that there is a clear link between a pay increase and teaching performance. Governors understand how the additional funding is spent and are clear on its effects on achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Parents, pupils and staff totally agree that behaviour and the way it is managed by staff are excellent. Pupils are very proud of their school.
- Pupils make their way around the school building calmly and sensibly. At playtimes, pupils from all backgrounds play extremely well together, taking turns and sharing equipment so that no one is left out. Pupils treat the environment with respect and ensure that there is no graffiti or litter. They behave exceptionally well and demonstrate good manners whilst eating their lunch in the dining room.
- Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about their learning and behave sensibly when given tasks to complete on their own or with a partner. They are polite and eager to explain what they are doing to adults. Presentation of pupils' books is excellent throughout the school.
- Pupils show a genuine care for one another and want to help and support. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, a boy that had understood how to complete the work took the care and time to explain to another pupil who was less clear.
- All staff have high expectations of behaviour and manage pupils very well, especially when individuals have difficulties in behaving well. Exclusion rates have fallen dramatically over the last two years to being very low. Attendance has improved and is currently just above the national average, with few persistent poor attenders.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe and well cared for by all the adults in the school. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children feel safe at school at all times.
- Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to stay safe through well-planned activities and assemblies. They are fully aware of the different kinds of bullying, including cyber bullying, and know what to do should it happen. School records show that there are very few racist or bullying incidents and the few recorded have been followed up rigorously.
- A strength of the school is its ability to foster good relationships between pupils and in preventing any discrimination. Very high levels of trust and respect exist between staff and pupils. School staff work very effectively with external agencies to support vulnerable children and their families.
- The school site is completely safe and secure and the identity of all visitors is checked before they enter the premises.

The quality of teaching is good

- As a result of effective action taken by the leaders of the school, the quality of teaching is good across the school. There are now examples of outstanding practice in all year groups including in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning at a faster rate this year. This is evident in the quantity and quality of work seen in pupils' workbooks.
- Excellent relationships between adults and pupils result in enthusiastic and confident pupils who enjoy learning and want to do their best.
- Writing is taught well. Pupils systematically master the basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling

because teachers use a lot of visual prompts to support pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas with their classmates, which gives them increased confidence to write. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, two teaching assistants acted out the roles of characters from a book which helped pupils to be more imaginative with the words that they used in their writing.

- Opportunities to develop a wide range of reading skills have increased across the school and reading is taught very well. Leaders have, over the last two years, ensured that teachers in Key Stage 1 are well trained and effective in teaching pupils how to blend sounds and letters. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to develop a love of reading and enjoy the wide range of texts available for them.
- The teaching of mathematics is good because teachers have good subject knowledge. They provide opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in a range of problem solving activities, so that understanding is secure, before moving on to the next skill.
- Pupils know how to improve their work because marking is done well by the teachers and pupils consistently respond to their advice.
- Teaching assistants are trained well. They work closely with teachers to plan and provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils, including those with English as an additional language. Support programmes for all pupils in need of assistance and those with special educational needs are very well planned and taught. As a result, these pupils make at least good, and sometimes exceptional, progress.
- Where teaching is not outstanding, learning is held back because pupils sometimes waste time as they wait for others to catch up after completing work that does too little to extend their thinking or deepen their skills. Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always given suitably challenging work to enable them to make rapid gains in their learning and attain highly.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards have improved year on year. This improvement has been greater in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Pupils' work observed during the inspection and the information the school provided on pupil progress confirm that, currently, most pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups, are achieving well from their various starting points.
- Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below what are typical for their age. Well-planned experiences and careful monitoring of children's progress help them to learn and develop successfully. Children make outstanding progress and are well prepared for Year 1. As a result of excellent teaching, the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding a good level of development is above that found nationally.
- The results of the phonic screening check for pupils in Year 1 have been broadly average for the last two years. The school's information indicates that, as a result of regular and more effective teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) in Year 1, this performance will improve further. Similarly, standards in reading are also on track at the end of Year 2. Pupils have developed a love of reading and demonstrated to inspectors good reading skills.
- Although in 2014 standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were an improvement on those attained in 2013, they remained below the national average in reading and mathematics and broadly in line in writing. A lower proportion than that found nationally attained the higher Level 3.
- School information and pupils' work books seen during the inspection indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are set to improve further this year. Progress across the key stage, in all classes and for all groups of pupils, is now good, and in many cases better. A higher proportion of pupils are now reaching standards at or above those expected for their age in all three subjects. These improvements are due to improved teaching and initiatives that provide more opportunity for targeted teaching groups.
- In 2014, at the end of Year 6, pupils made exceptional progress in reading and mathematics to standards that were significantly above the national average. This includes those pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from different ethnic minority groups. Over half of pupils made better than expected progress in both of these subjects. Just over two fifths of pupils made better than expected progress in writing, to standards that were above the national average. In all subjects, standards were higher than the previous year. School information indicates that this level of achievement will be maintained at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015.
- The school tracks the achievement of vulnerable pupils and those with a disability or special educational needs very carefully. This has resulted in their particular needs being very well met. Progress for these pupils is at least good, and with some individual pupils making excellent progress. This is because teaching assistants are very well trained and work exceptionally well with both individuals and groups of pupils.

- Although the most able do well by the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 is lower than the national average in reading and mathematics. Pupils' books indicate that the most able pupils currently in Year 1 have more opportunities for higher level work, but teachers do not always move them on swiftly enough to ensure that they are consistently challenged to do harder work.
- In 2014, the standards attained by disadvantaged pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were below other pupils in school and other pupils nationally. Although at the end of Key Stage 2 the gap in school narrowed significantly on the previous year, it was 12 months in mathematics, seven months in reading, 14 months in writing and 10 months in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils that made expected progress was similar to that of others in the school in all subjects. However, they were less likely than other pupils in school to make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils were also less likely than their peers to attain the higher levels at the end of both key stages. As a consequence of the increased focus on the progress of these pupils by leaders and managers and very effective interventions, the gaps are set to close further in 2015.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years is managed very effectively. There is strong teamwork and a good ratio of staff to children. The school has very well organised induction systems which enable the children to settle quickly into school life.
- Leaders and staff have established strong relationships with parents, which help them to feel very safe and secure at school. Regular meetings and informal conversations at the start of the day also help parents to be fully involved in their child's development. Parents were very supportive of the provision and told inspectors that they felt very lucky to have a place for their child.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. Children settle quickly into daily routines and form positive relationships with adults and each other. They cooperate well with each other, for example taking turns to pour water into containers and using the glue to finish their glitter pictures.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating and purposeful activities that captures children's imagination and fully engages their interest. This means that children enjoy learning and make outstanding progress. Phonics teaching is of a very high standard. Teachers and other staff gain the full attention and participation of the children through the use of stimulating and imaginative resources and activities, such as helping Pirate Pete make soup out of objects starting with particular sounds.
- Children are encouraged to become confident in pursuing indoor and outdoor activities that match their own interests as well as those directed by adults. Adults ask very good questions and keep a close check on how well children are doing. This information is used to plan effectively for the next steps in learning.
- Early reading, speaking and writing skills are developing well and the outcomes are set to improve even further on 2014. Adults' positive engagement with the children during tasks, such as role play, allows them to make imaginative use of their language. High expectations and the posing of challenges have been instrumental in securing a greater proportion of pupils exceeding a good level of development in all areas.

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	130918
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	449371

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	519
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Robinson
Headteacher	Sarah Beard
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 January 2011
Telephone number	02072742520
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