

The James Cambell Primary School

Langley Crescent, Dagenham, RM9 6TD

Inspection dates 13 – 14 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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.

- Pupils start school with skills that are significantly below those typical for their age. Improvements in teaching over the past year mean that pupils now make good progress.
- From low starting points overall standards in Key Stage 1 are below average. However, the recent Year 2 tests show that standards are improving, especially in reading. The progress made by pupils this year is good.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils now make good progress to reach standards that are close to the average. Standards have improved each year since the infant and primary school joined to become one school.
- Leaders at all levels have high expectations for pupils and a strong focus on improving their education. This is having a noticeable impact on improving teaching and raising achievement.
- Attendance improved this year and is now in line with the national average.
- Pupils' behaviour in and out of classrooms is good. They are extremely polite and well mannered. Pupils have very positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. This helps them to achieve well.
- A persistent focus on reading is helping to boost pupils' achievements in English.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective. Children make good progress in learning English and developing their social skills.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to avoid dangerous situations. This is because all staff provide a high quality of care including for those who may be particularly vulnerable.
- Senior and middle leaders check pupils' progress frequently and provide effective support to those who need it.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school and how it has improved since the merging of the two schools. They are supportive of senior leaders' work to improve teaching and raise standards further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing is not yet consistently good.
- In a few lessons, pupils lose attention a little and this stops learning being excellent.
- Tasks do not always challenge the most able pupils. On the few occasions where this happens, these pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 35 lessons or parts of lessons. One lesson was observed jointly with a deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed the teaching of reading, listened to pupils read, attended assemblies and briefly looked at after-school clubs.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, phase and year group leaders, pupils and governors. The lead inspector had a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school improvement plan, the school’s evaluation of its work, information on pupils’ current progress, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ work and looked in their exercise books.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and received two letters from parents.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour around the school at playtime, lunchtime and in lessons.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Olson Davis	Additional Inspector
Michael Elson	Additional Inspector
Lynne Kaufmann	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The James Cambell Primary School is much larger than the average sized primary school.
- The school opened in January 2012 as a result of the closure of an infant and a junior school. It is based on the same site that these schools occupied.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average. About a third are White British followed by pupils from an African heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is well above average. Sixty five per cent of children starting in the Nursery in 2014 did not speak English or elected not to speak. The nursery provision is part time, morning and afternoon.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, additional funding for children who are looked after and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average at around two fifths of the school.
- The proportion of pupils who start school mid-way through the year is high.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school manages a unit for 12 pupils with social and emotional needs on behalf of the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching further so that it is consistently good or outstanding across the school by:
 - ensuring that all lessons capture pupils' interest and imagination so that they remain highly motivated throughout
 - ensuring that all pupils, including the most able, are given work that is pitched at the right level so that progress can be accelerated.
- Raise achievement further for all pupils through:
 - ensuring an even greater focus on reading and particularly writing across all subjects
 - building on the good work in mathematics to promote numeracy across subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school has been on a journey since the infant and junior schools amalgamated in January 2012. In the three years since, robust and resilient leadership has overcome very significant challenges to move the school forward on all fronts. Much of this is due to the accuracy of the school's analysis of its performance including the quality of teaching. Senior leaders know their school well and have identified priorities for improvement clearly.
- All leaders are ambitious for the school and aspirational for its pupils. Through the skill and resolve of the headteacher and deputy headteachers there is a strong and persistent focus on improving learning for all pupils. As a result, teaching is now good and achievement is rising. Attainment remains below average but has improved every year since 2012 and is forecast to improve further this year. The early results of the 2015 key stage tests show improvement on those for 2014.
- The curriculum is organised carefully so that pupils have a good range of experiences. This is one of the reasons that overall achievement is rising. The strong focus on English and mathematics is having a clear impact on pupils' achievements. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and successfully enriches pupils' experiences by using outside support to provide a wide range of creative and expressive activities such as dance, drama, music and French. During the inspection a second group of 30 Year 5 pupils was on a residential visit to Wales. This variety of experiences enables all pupils to achieve success and increase their confidence.
- The arrangements for managing the performance of staff are effective. Regular meetings with senior leaders enable middle leaders to discuss their achievements and set future targets in a way that encourages self-review and reflection. This has a considerable impact on the way all leaders and staff are committed to the school's aims. Relationships among staff are friendly but professional, and strong teamwork is improving standards and quality across the school.
- The school's systems for checking pupils' progress are good. Pupils needing extra help with their learning are identified quickly. Well thought out support is used to boost their learning. The impact of this work, and the use of the pupil premium funding, is evaluated carefully to ensure that it has a positive impact on learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are increasingly making good progress, especially in reading. This illustrates the positive impact of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The primary sports funding is spent effectively. The teaching of physical education and sport has improved significantly so that all pupils have an opportunity to take part in sporting or physical activities. This is helping to promote more healthy lifestyles and pupils' personal development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. All adults encourage good relationships successfully and are excellent role models for pupils. As a result, pupils show high levels of mutual respect and have a strong sense of right and wrong.
- There are good opportunities for learning about British values such as tolerance, respect, democracy and law through well-planned lessons. For example, during the inspection pupils in a Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson discussed the workings of local government. The school provides effectively for pupils' personal development and how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The leadership of the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Checks on pupils' progress and learning are thorough and this ensures that those with particular needs are identified accurately.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure. The school meets all the requirements including those for safer recruitment and child protection. As a result, pupils are safe in school and cared for very well.
- Parents who responded to Parent View or those who were spoken with were positive about the school and all felt that their children were happy. Two parents also wrote letters to the inspectors expressing their praise for the way the school has improved the achievements of their children.
- The local authority provides good support for the school including a very recent review of teaching and learning. Links with other schools in the local authority provide opportunities for senior leaders to share ideas more widely and check that their judgements are accurate.
- The Cambell Primary Centre, an alternative provision unit for pupils with social and emotional needs, is well led and managed by the school on behalf of the local authority. This ensures that pupils from the main school who attend the centre make good progress and attend regularly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors challenge and support the school in equal measure and have been central to the improvements made over the past few years. They are provided with a good range of reliable

information and data on which to base their understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Some governors make regular visits to the school to gain a first-hand understanding of its work and report back to the governing body. A recent restructuring of the governing body has improved the way it works.

- Governors are clear about the quality of teaching, the support teachers receive and the link between performance and pay. They are updated regularly about the use of additional funding, including sports and pupil premium funding, and the effect it has on pupils' achievements.
- The governing body meets its legal obligations successfully, including those related to safeguarding and the work of the Cambell Primary Centre.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are very respectful and well mannered and have a strong appreciation of what is right and wrong. Pupils have a keen sense of belonging to the school and as a result get involved readily in taking responsibility for aspects of school life. For example, Year 6 pupils are elected as house captains and all classes choose representatives for the school council by voting.
- Pupils confirm that behaviour is good in classrooms and around the school. They know how the school's systems for rewards and sanctions work. For example, they speak knowledgeably about 'Keeping on Green' and the effect this has on good behaviour. Pupils report that incidents of bullying are rare but if they do happen they are dealt with quickly and effectively by teachers. They are very clear that their teachers help them if they have any concerns.
- The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that behaviour is good and the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their work are a strength. They respond very well to the school's behaviour systems so that learning is rarely slowed by disruptive behaviour. This has a strong impact on pupils' achievement as well as the school's positive climate for learning.
- Pupils show a high level of respect towards each other and their teachers and support staff. Their behaviour in the playground and their care and concern for each other impressed the inspectors. For example, Year 6 pupils show great concern for younger pupils.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They know who to turn to if they have any worries and are confident that teachers and other adults will solve any problem they may have.
- Extremely positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute noticeably to the school's very positive climate and atmosphere of mutual respect and concern. Pupils are clear that the school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind, but that if it does happen the headteacher deals with it swiftly.
- Attendance is now in line with the national average and pupils' punctuality to lessons is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their lessons. Procedures for following up absence are effective.
- The school works effectively with other agencies if it has concerns about a pupil's safety. As a result, pupils who are especially vulnerable are protected well. This includes the alternative provision unit which the school manages on behalf of the local authority.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lessons are well planned and thoroughly prepared. Accurate, ongoing assessment ensures that teachers know what pupils can already do. As a result, they usually provide pupils with challenging work and activities that build on existing learning. Occasionally, tasks do not extend pupils' existing knowledge and skills sufficiently and learning slows. This is occasionally the case for the most able pupils who do not always make as much progress as they could. In a few other lessons, it results in pupils not paying as much attention as they should. This is rarely disruptive but the pace is not as brisk as it could be.
- A significant strength of teaching is the positive climate for learning that all staff create in classrooms and around the school. As a result, pupils listen attentively, respond with respect to their teachers and are keen to do well. They get on with their work without constant nagging from teachers and enjoy the opportunity to work together. Pupils enjoy working in pairs or groups and this has a good impact on

progress and attitudes.

- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective and, as a result, pupils' reading skills have improved significantly. They are able to tackle a variety of challenging books and use their reading skills across a range of other subjects. When pupils read aloud to the whole class, they do so with confidence and skill.
- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills are increasingly well developed. This is because of improvements in teaching, especially in the way lessons are planned, and the guidance teachers get from senior and middle leaders. Reading has been a key priority of the school's improvement strategy and is now taught very effectively. Pupils read widely and enjoy reading for pleasure. A great deal has been invested in buying new books and there is a wide range of books which pupils can read at school and take home.
- Mathematics teaching has improved in recent years so that more pupils are making at least expected progress. There is a good focus on teaching mathematical skills and in making sure that pupils understand the mathematical ideas before moving on to the next topic. This is resulting in pupils being able to apply their knowledge to different situations. 'Playground maths', where pupils use the outside space and equipment to put into practice what they have learnt in lessons, re-enforces classroom learning effectively. For example, pupils measure the playground furniture or the distance from one side to the other. Mathematics skills are often applied in other subjects but this is not consistent across the curriculum.
- There is clear evidence in pupils' books that writing is now being effectively taught. They can use their skills to write for a range of purposes and audiences and over time their writing has improved. In nearly all classes, writing is marked effectively so that pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Teachers follow up their marking carefully and ensure that pupils have acted on their comments.
- Teaching assistants and other adults who support learning have a strong impact on pupils' achievements and progress. All staff have a thorough knowledge of pupils' skills and abilities and are closely involved in planning activities. As a result, most pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, learn well.

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- The great majority of pupils from all groups now make good progress from their different starting points. Progress of these pupils has been slower in previous years because of weaker teaching. However, teaching has now improved and the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards has increased every year since the school opened.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the most recent phonic screening check was similar to other schools. Given that their starting points are significantly below those typical for their age, especially in English, this represents good progress.
- From low starting points at Key Stage 1, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 was below average overall. However, the school's assessment data show that standards are rising, especially in reading where the proportion of pupils making expected progress and better than expected progress is now above the national average. Work in pupils' books confirms that pupils are making good progress from low starting points.
- At Key Stage 2, the 2014 test results were average overall in mathematics and writing but below average in reading. The proportion of pupils who made expected or better than expected progress was average in mathematics but below average in reading and writing. However, standards and progress have improved this year, especially in reading. This improvement is evident from pupils' books and the school's assessment data.
- Overall, the most able pupils make good progress. The proportion of pupils working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved. At Key Stage 2 writing remains a little below average but the school's data show that the proportion working at the higher levels has doubled since 2014. Generally, the most able pupils tackle challenging work confidently, but there are occasions when the work set is not stretching. This hinders their progress.
- As a result of good quality support, most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points.
- The gap in achievement between disadvantaged and other pupils nationally is closing successfully. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils who left in 2014 was about one and a half terms behind other pupils in the school in reading, a little under a term behind in mathematics and about a third of a term ahead in writing. Compared with other pupils nationally, their attainment was two and a half terms behind in

reading, about two terms behind in writing, and a little over one term behind in mathematics. This is a very significant reduction of around two terms on the gap in attainment in 2013.

- In 2014 disadvantaged pupils made the same progress as other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics but progress was not as good in reading. However, the evidence from the school's assessment data shows that as overall performance has improved this year, especially in reading, the gap in achievement is continuing to close. Disadvantaged pupils are now making similar progress to others in the school, especially in reading, from their individual starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They are especially weak in communication and language development and this year, around 65% were unable or unwilling to speak when they started. Children make good progress from these low starting points.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led very successfully. The inspiring senior leader responsible for the area ensures that the team all share her high expectations for children and themselves. They provide very positive role models. As a result, children make good progress especially with their English and social skills.
- Staff check children's achievements carefully. Children's progress is assessed throughout their time in early years and measured carefully from their different starting points. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants provide support that enables those falling behind to catch up.
- Senior leaders have a firm handle on the quality of teaching. They ensure that children have a range of rich experiences so that the curriculum meets their specific needs very well.
- The development of children's communication and language skills, and their mathematical skills, is good. In one session, children were engaged in a wide range of activities to add and subtract single and double digit numbers and made good use of resources to trial and advance their learning.
- Teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Approaches to teaching and learning are shared across the team and good practice from outside the school is used effectively to raise standards. Teaching assistants have a very positive impact on children's learning because they are involved fully in the planning and organisation of learning. Behaviour is managed particularly well and the school's behaviour policy is integrated well into the work of the early years.
- Indoor and outdoor space is well organised, safe and secure. Each provides good opportunities for children to learn from a range of well-planned activities. Consequently, children make good progress in all the areas of learning.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is woven carefully into the curriculum and through the themes which are used to cover the curriculum.
- Children respond well to the very supportive atmosphere established by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, children learn to respect all adults and each other, and behave very well. The caring and encouraging relationships ensure that children are safe and secure and that they are looked after well.

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	101186
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	462191

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	912
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Wake
Headteacher	Mrs Kerry Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 June 2013
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