

Furness Primary School

Furness Road, London, NW10 5YT.

Inspection dates

11 – 12 June 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.

- The executive headteacher and the governors are ambitious for pupils. They have set a clear direction for the school and its improvement.
- Leaders and managers work well as a team to check the quality of teaching, and provide teachers with effective support to bring about improvements. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Robust systems are in place to check the progress of pupils, and provide them with effective support to ensure that they do well in their learning. As a result, all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively as a team to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Provision in the early years is good, with children making good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful, and have good attitudes to learning. They are well cared for and kept safe by staff.
- The school promotes British values effectively and teaches pupils how to be kind and respectful to others. It provides pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The governing body is effective and holds senior leaders to good account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing across the school is weaker than in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils do not routinely use their learning targets in English and mathematics to check their progress towards achieving them.
- Teaching does not always ensure that some of the weaker learners make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils do not consistently take sufficient care over the presentation of their work, and their work is sometimes untidy.
- Attendance is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 26 lessons, of which four sessions were jointly observed with the deputy headteacher. The deputy headteacher also joined an inspector looking at the progress of pupils in their work.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes and attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with different groups of pupils to discuss their learning and their views about the school. The inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1 and 6 read, and discussed their reading with them.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and the governor who chairs the curriculum committee. A telephone discussion was also held with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation, including the school's information on how well pupils are learning, improvement plans, and checks on the quality of teaching. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, safety, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work throughout the school to note their progress and to judge the quality of marking and feedback.
- Inspectors considered the school's own survey on the views of 83 parents about the school. There were not enough responses received from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to produce a representative analysis of parents' views. In addition, inspectors spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors also considered 17 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Austins	Additional Inspector
Enid Korn	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Furness Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is federated with Oakington Manor Primary School. The federation is led by an executive headteacher and shares one governing body.
- The school has a part-time Nursery class and three full-time Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding provided to give extra support to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after) is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is well above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress by ensuring that:
 - pupils use their learning targets in English and mathematics in lessons to check their progress towards achieving them
 - the progress of the weaker learners is regularly checked during lessons to make sure that their learning is secure and they complete their work
 - pupils' work is consistently tidy and well presented.
- Improve pupils' attainment in writing by ensuring that they write more in English and other subjects in order to develop their ideas and improve their writing skills.
- Improve attendance by working more closely with some parents to ensure that they all fully support the school's efforts to bring about improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher provides a clear vision for the school. Together with the deputy headteacher, governors and other leaders, she is committed to continuous school improvement and has been successful in bringing about improvements since the previous inspection. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.
- The leadership of teaching is good. The school's systems on managing and improving teachers' performance are effective and leading to continuing improvement. Leaders and managers carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and provide effective support and training for staff. Teachers are provided with feedback on how to improve, with a much sharper focus on the progress of pupils. Teachers also benefit from working closely with staff from the federated school to improve their skills further.
- Middle leaders are effective in their roles. They know the main strengths and areas for development of the school, including those in their own subjects. Middle leaders make good use of opportunities to check the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils. They are increasingly involved in holding teachers accountable for the progress their pupils make.
- Leaders have an accurate view about the school's effectiveness. They are fully aware of the main strengths and areas for development, and ensure that the school improvement plan identifies the main priorities. However, the role of governors in assessing the impact of actions, to hold senior leaders more accountable for the work they do, is not always clear.
- Leaders work effectively with early years staff to ensure that teaching in the early years is good and that children make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have been successful in ensuring that there are robust systems in place for tracking the progress of individual pupils and of different groups of pupils. Those pupils who do not make sufficient progress are quickly identified and provided with additional support. In this way, the school ensures that any lower attaining pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress and that there is equality of opportunity for all and no discrimination.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that the provision for disadvantaged pupils is effective and the additional funding is used well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The school is making effective use of its primary physical education and sports premium. Pupils have access to a much wider range of sporting activities and clubs and are involved in competitive games with other schools. Teachers' skills in teaching physical education are enhanced through training, some of which is delivered by sports coaches. Good links have been established with local football teams to provide pupils with further sporting activities.
- The broad range of subjects engages pupils in their learning, providing them with a breadth of learning experiences, and developing their knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The subjects taught are increasingly based on the primary National Curriculum with topic themes and suitable links between subjects. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to learn Spanish across the year groups.
- Pupils are provided with a good range of engaging activities, including visits, and artistic, musical and sporting activities. For example, the school's artist-in-residence has some of the pupils' artistic work on his website, and pupils visit different places of worship to learn about different religions.
- Pupils learn about rights and responsibilities and respect for diversity, and are prepared well for life in modern Britain. British values are effectively promoted through, for example, the democratic process of choosing members of the school council.
- The curriculum does not yet ensure that pupils' attainment in writing is as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- The school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies contribute well to pupils' understanding of human rights and responsibilities, what is morally right and what is wrong, and allow pupils opportunities to reflect.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements and are effective. Staff and governors ensure that pupils are kept safe, and that all staff training on safeguarding and child protection is in place.
- Almost all parents who responded to the school's survey about the school agreed that the school was well led and managed.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this good school. The local authority has worked successfully with senior leaders to bring about improvements in the system for tracking the progress of pupils and using the information to raise achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is effective and governors are ambitious. They are committed to ongoing school improvement and to securing the best possible outcomes for pupils. They visit the school and know it well, including its strengths and areas for development.
- Governors attend training to ensure they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to enable them to hold the school to account to bring about improvements. For example, they have had training on looking at the performance data and know how well the school is doing in relation to other schools nationally. They make school visits to ensure pupils are safe and learning well.
- Governors receive good quality information from the executive headteacher on the quality of teaching. They understand the link between salary progression and the quality of teaching, and how teachers' performance and pay are used to reward the best teachers. Governors also manage the performance of the headteacher. They set challenging targets to bring about improvements and raise the achievement of pupils.
- Governors have the skills and expertise to ensure that financial management is effective. They know how the pupil premium and sports premium are used, and the impact of this additional funding on pupil outcomes. Governors have been instrumental in improving the playground by providing a play area and a running track to increase pupils' fitness levels.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are kind and friendly; they show respect for each other and to all adults. Their positive attitudes to learning make a significant contribution to the good progress they make.
- Pupils are proud of their school, and are keen to wear their new uniform. They take good care of the school environment and make sure that it is litter free. The dining hall is calm, and pupils socialise well with each other. Pupil dinner monitors help to put away the used plates and cutlery and they also clean the floor.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on extremely well with each other. Lunchtimes and break times are very orderly and staff provide good supervision.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good, and all staff and most of the parents agree with them.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because there are occasions when a few pupils lose concentration in lessons. At these times, they do not display a thirst for knowledge and understanding, and their progress slows. Some pupils do not always take enough care with the presentation of their work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe, and are able to approach a member of the staff if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. They say they use the 'worry box' to share any concerns they may have and can talk to a counsellor.
- Pupils are kept safe by staff, and are taught well about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, and they know about road and fire safety.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying. They say that bullying is not an issue. Incidents of racism and homophobia are rare, and are dealt with quickly by staff if they do happen.
- Although attendance is improving, it is below average. The school is working hard to improve attendance, but some parents are yet to be persuaded of the link between regular attendance and the achievement of their children. The breakfast club is well run and supervised, and staff say that it is contributing to improvements in punctuality and attendance. There have been no recent exclusions.
- Almost all parents responding to the school survey say that children are safe and well cared for at school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Leaders and managers have been successful in improving the quality of teaching since the previous inspection through closer monitoring of teaching. They have also provided teachers with effective support and training. The quality of teaching is now good and ensures that pupils make good progress in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively as a team to build good working relationships with their pupils and to support their learning. Activities are planned well, build on pupils' previous experience, capture their interest and engage them in their learning. As a result, most pupils respond well to their learning and want to do their best.

- A strong feature in lessons is the rich opportunities pupils have for speaking and listening and to share their ideas with each other in pairs and groups. This helps pupils to develop their communication skills quickly. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from this especially. As a result, they make good progress with their learning.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils have opportunities to read to staff, and in their guided reading sessions they are able to extend their vocabulary skills.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well, and pupils are able to use their understanding of phonics to read unfamiliar or difficult words. As a result, pupils' love for reading is growing. The school provides workshops to help parents support their children's reading at home.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge in mathematics. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mental calculation skills to solve problems. They are taught how to apply their mathematical knowledge to tasks that involve solving practical problems. For example, pupils in Year 5 were given challenging word problems to solve, and were able to identify the correct addition or subtraction operations that should be used.
- Teachers work closely with leaders to check the progress of pupils. Pupils who are identified as lacking in progress are provided with effective support. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Leaders have been successful in improving the quality of marking since the previous inspection in line with the school's marking policy. The quality of marking of pupils' work is now good, and pupils are given good guidance by their teachers. Pupils are also given opportunities to act upon teachers' comments to help them improve their work.
- Leaders and staff are working effectively towards fully implementing an effective assessment system for the new primary National Curriculum.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning, especially those pupils with particular needs. Teachers and teaching assistants generally make good use of questioning to test pupils' understanding. However, they do not always check the progress of weaker learners closely enough to ensure they have fully understood what they are learning and that there are no gaps in their learning. As a result, they do not always complete their tasks, and progress slows.
- Pupils often have their learning targets in their books. However, they do not routinely make reference to them in lessons to check their own progress towards achieving them. This also slows their progress.
- Although writing is improving, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to improve their writing skills. This includes writing at length, both in English and in a range of subjects and topics.
- The presentation of some pupils' work is poor. This is not always followed up rigorously enough by teachers, and a few pupils continue to produce untidy work in their books. As a result, the quality of these pupils' handwriting is not improving quickly enough, and in mathematics it is sometimes difficult to see where they have made mistakes in their working-out. This slows their progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Leaders and managers have been effective in improving standards since the previous inspection. From their low starting points, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and achieve well. This is borne out by the schools' own information on pupils' progress, and a scrutiny of pupils' work by inspectors.
- In 2014, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 was broadly average. Almost all pupils at the end of the Year 6 national tests made expected progress in mathematics and reading, and most pupils made expected progress in writing. A higher proportion than average made more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupil performance information shows that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. However, the national progress data of for pupils in the school is markedly affected by a higher-than-average proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times. The school's current data show that pupils who joined the school in the Reception class and stayed on until the end of Year 2 made noticeably better progress than those who joined the school during Years 1 or 2.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 standard of attainment at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and reading was well above average. However, fewer pupils achieved the higher level in writing. Currently, the proportion of pupils on track to attain the higher Level 5 standard in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 this year has increased. The attainment of pupils in writing is weaker than in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2014 were above average. Pupils make good

progress in reading, and their attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average.

- The most able pupils make good, and sometimes better, progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers ensure that the most able pupils are given challenging work to help them achieve higher levels. Every pupil who reached the high Level 3 standard in assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2010 went on to gain at least Level 5 in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who speak English as an additional language, is good in reading, writing and mathematics. They receive carefully targeted support, from teachers and teaching assistants. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different ethnic groups of pupils in the school.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is closely monitored, and teaching assistants are deployed well to provide effective support for these pupils to ensure they make good progress. They make good progress from their different starting points in relation to those of other pupils nationally, and achieve well.
- At the end of Year 6 tests in 2014, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates was eliminated in reading, writing and mathematics. They did better than their classmates in reading and mathematics, and they did as well as the classmates in writing. Compared to other pupils nationally, the attainment gap for the disadvantaged pupils was eliminated in reading and mathematics, but not in writing. They did better than other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics; however, in writing they were about six months behind them.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the school in the early years with skills and knowledge that are lower, and for some, significantly lower, than is typical for their age, especially in their communication and language skills and personal, social and emotional development.
- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Staff make secure assessments of children's skills and knowledge, and information on their achievement is recorded in their 'learning journeys'. These capture the activities children have engaged in, but they do not always identify the progress the children have made over time, or the next steps in their learning. A strong partnership with parents ensures the children settle down well and quickly become familiar with routines. Parents are kept informed about the progress their children make through meetings and workshops.
- Children receive good care and support. Teaching is consistently good, and is especially strong in the Nursery. All the children make good progress from their different starting points. This includes disabled children, those who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language, and the most able. The school's current information shows that the proportion of children on track to achieve a good level of development in 2015 is in line with the national average. Children are prepared well for when they move into Year 1.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their time in early years; their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning contribute well to the good progress they make. Staff provide a wide range of activities that engage children in their learning and capture their interest. Children show independence and confidence, and are keen to talk about their learning to adults, including visitors. For example, in the Nursery class children invited the inspector to watch them make a paper fan by meticulously folding it into small sections. They were highly focused and demonstrated well-developed fine motor skills in completing the task quickly and successfully.
- Staff ensure that children have good access to resources, both inside and in the outdoor spaces, to support their learning. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities, all of which focus on and promote learning.
- Children are kept safe. All the safeguarding requirements are met and are effective.

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	101525
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	462182

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	540
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Jhally
Headteacher	Sylvie Libson OBE
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 June 2013
Telephone number	02089655977
Fax number	02089631938
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