

Gilbert Scott Primary School

Farnborough Avenue, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 8HD

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Leaders and governors have not secured consistently good teaching. They have not secured good achievement for all pupils, in particular for the most-able pupils. The school demonstrates only adequate capacity to improve.
- Leaders and governors are not rigorous enough in their self-assessment. They do not expect enough of pupils, and are too ready to make allowances for achievement that is not good.
- Leaders' plans for school improvement are not ambitious enough, and do not always get to the heart of what is needed.
- Leaders do not manage the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour to ensure that it is consistently good. They do not always ensure that teachers follow up their advice sufficiently well. They do not always focus sharply enough on how well all pupils are learning.
- Subject leaders do not always pinpoint the areas of weak progress made by pupils. This does not always help them improve.
- Governors do not always robustly hold the school to account for areas in its performance that require improvement.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of pupils, particularly the most able.
- Teachers do not consistently make sure that the level of challenge meets the needs of all pupils.
- Teaching does not consistently lead to pupils making rapid progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Achievement requires improvement because proportions making strong progress over the past three years have been below average.
- The most-able pupils do not attain highly enough.
- The play equipment and materials used by the children in the early years provision are somewhat uninspiring. This slows children's learning.
- The outdoor play spaces in the early years provision are not used successfully to stimulate learning in a wide enough range of skills.

The school has the following strengths

- There is strong provision for pupils who attend the special classes for those with a range of complex needs. This helps them to make good progress in acquiring skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have additional needs in the mainstream school make good progress in their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress and generally attain well.
- Pupils behave well. Pupils from all backgrounds and heritages are kind to one another and get on well together.
- The school keeps pupils safe and helps them to keep themselves safe.
- The school is popular with parents and engages well with them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 18 lessons across a range of subjects to observe pupils' learning. Five were observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work. An inspector met a group of pupils to hear how they felt about the school.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including those who hold responsibility for specific subjects. A meeting was held with the local authority's school link advisor. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body, and three other governors. An inspector met the Vice-Chair on a separate occasion.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 39 questionnaires.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection, and took account of a survey of parents' views provided by the school. There were too few responses to Parent View, the online survey, to be taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own views of how well it is doing, its plans for the future and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils' attainment and progress. Inspectors also examined safeguarding information, and records relating to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gilbert Scott Primary is a little smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by pupil premium funding, is higher than average. This government funding is used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic heritages is higher than average. A wide variety of heritages are represented in the school. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school incorporates a specialist resource unit, Willow Tree Nursery. This provides for up to six children in the morning sessions and six in the afternoon sessions who have severe and complex needs. The school also incorporates two classes for a total of 15 pupils, referred by the local authority. These pupils, ranging in age from Reception to Year 6, have moderate learning difficulties. They join their mainstream classes in the afternoons and for assemblies.
- The overall proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The children's centre on site is inspected separately and did not form part of this inspection.
- Children attend the Nursery part time in the morning sessions. Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of leadership, so that the school is good, by ensuring that leaders and governors:
 - improve their self-evaluation so that there are no excuses for pupils' underperformance
 - plan more effectively for school improvement, so that pupils achieve better
 - expect higher standards of teaching, so that its quality is consistently good
 - offer clear next steps to teachers throughout the school on how to improve, and follow it up to make sure the advice improves pupils' learning
 - make sure that observations on the quality of teaching focus sharply on how well all pupils are learning
 - make sure that subject leaders accurately identify what will help pupils make progress in their areas and put effective measures in place to help them
 - ensure that governors fulfil their obligation to hold the school to account.
- Make sure that the teaching leads to pupils making rapid progress, particularly in reading and mathematics throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of their pupils, particularly the most able
 - ensuring that the level of challenge is neither too easy for the most-able pupils nor too hard for those who struggle.
- Ensure that the early years provision provides high-quality learning opportunities by:
 - improving the equipment and resources used by the children, so that they have more opportunities to explore new activities and learn a wider range of skills
 - providing more chances for children to learn language, number and science skills in the outdoor play areas.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leaders and governors are effective in creating a culture where pupils feel happy and behave well. Leaders and governors are less successful in creating a culture where all aspire towards excellence. They are not ambitious enough in ensuring that teaching is consistently good and that pupils consistently aim high. This is why leadership requires improvement.
 - Leaders and governors understand that there are weak areas in the school's performance. However, they do not always expect enough of pupils, and they make too many allowances for teaching that is not good. As a result, pupils' achievement requires improvement.
 - The school's capacity to improve is adequate. Since the last inspection, leaders and governors have secured advances in some areas. Disabled pupils and those with a range of additional needs, both in special classes and in the mainstream, achieve well. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, compared with other pupils at the school and with other pupils nationally. However, improvements have not been secured in the achievement of the most-able pupils.
 - The school's plans for future improvement are not robust or ambitious enough. They do not target the main areas for school improvement effectively, such as the quality of teaching.
 - Leaders do not secure consistently good teaching. They do not always provide effective enough advice on how teachers can improve, and neither do they always ensure that teachers work on the suggestions. In their classroom visits they do not focus sharply enough on how well pupils are learning. As a result, pupils are not always helped to do as well as they could.
 - Subject leaders are not effective enough in raising pupils' achievement. They do not always identify accurately enough the areas in which pupils need to improve, and therefore cannot always help them succeed in making progress.
 - The local authority has identified the school as having vulnerabilities, and has provided support over time. However, this has not had sufficient impact.
 - Leaders adequately promote equality of opportunity. The school is a happy environment in which those from all backgrounds get on well together. There is no discrimination against anyone. Disabled pupils and those with a range of additional needs get the opportunity to do well in their learning. However, pupils are not always helped to do well.
 - The school uses the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils successfully. They make good progress, and their attainment matches and sometimes exceeds that of other pupils at the school.
 - The school makes effective use of the additional sports premium for primary schools. New participants are attracted to such sports as girls' cricket. Leaders and governors use the money well to ensure that class teachers know how to carry the skills forward should the funding stop.
 - The curriculum prepares pupils for the next phase of schooling. There is an appropriate balance of subjects. Pupils acquire adequate skills in literacy and numeracy.
 - Pupils are prepared well for growing up in modern Britain. The school introduces them to such topics as democracy and the role of the monarchy. An inspector enjoyed seeing Year 6 pupils sitting in a circle discussing how to make informed choices. Pupils made such comments as, 'smoking is not good for your health,' and 'I need to work hard to get good results for my future'. In such ways, pupils learn to understand the complex world in which they live.
 - The school engages well with parents and is popular with them. Parents told inspectors that the school is a community that supports the whole family. Parents of pupils with a range of additional needs particularly appreciated the school's support.
 - Leaders and governors effectively carry out their statutory obligation to keep pupils safe. Adults who work with children are checked carefully. The school works in effective partnership with a range of external agencies to ensure the safeguarding of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body is actively engaged in the life of the school. For example, it took the initiative in awarding a governors' trophy to pupils who make an outstanding contribution. Governors attend 'special lunches', in which pupils who have been especially kind to others or who have made other contributions sit at top table with leaders and governors.
 - Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils achieve in relation to others nationally. They understand both school and published data. However, they do not use the information well to hold the school to account for weaknesses in pupils' achievement and leaders' management of teaching. They

share the school's culture of making too many allowances for pupils' underperformance. As a result, pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

- Governors visit classes to see the quality of teaching for themselves. However, they accept too readily the school's assertion that teaching is consistently good. They do not ask searching enough questions about the link between teaching and weaknesses in pupils' progress.
- Governors do not secure good value for money from the teaching force. They do not ensure that teachers' movement along the pay scales is linked rigorously enough to pupils' progress. However, governors know what to do in individual cases where staff underperform, and are ready to tackle any such cases.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties to keep pupils safe effectively. They are well trained in safeguarding and in safer recruitment. They walk the site to make sure it is secure.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils from a wide range of heritages and backgrounds learn and play together peaceably. They respect one another. This is because they absorb the school's positive values. For example, in an assembly, pupils were encouraged by the headteacher to think of 'fantastic ways' in which they could make a difference to others. In such ways the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Behaviour is not outstanding, because pupils are not exceptionally eager to learn. On occasion, pupils become restless and lose concentration for a while. This slows their learning.
- Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors. They are ready to hold doors open for others. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they were not afraid of other pupils, and that behaviour in lessons was generally good.
- The nurture group provides effective support to pupils who attend. Staff help individual pupils to learn to cope with their emotions by articulating their feelings. This helps them to understand and control their behaviour.
- Children in the Willow Tree Nursery enjoy the many exciting activities they are presented with. They behave well and are calm and ready to cooperate with the adults.
- Breakfast club provides those who attend with healthy food. Pupils are given a range of activities with a focus on helping them to build their concentration and resilience in seeing tasks through.
- A scrutiny of the school's records of behaviour incidents shows that examples of poor behaviour are few and far between. There have been no exclusions of pupils in the current academic year.
- Leaders and external agencies have worked together effectively to improve attendance. It is now average. This is an improvement on previous years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is secure. Adults who work with children are carefully checked. A scrutiny of safeguarding documents confirms that children are protected well from harm.
- Leaders and staff are well trained in child protection issues, such as radicalisation, domestic violence and drug abuse. This enables them to maintain vigilance. There are strong procedures in place to deal with allegations against any adult that might occur.
- Pupils confirmed that there are few instances of pupils being unkind to one another. If they have any concerns or worries, they know which adults to turn to.
- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. They understand possible dangers from using computers and from people they do not know and trust. They know what cyber-bullying means and how to prevent it happening to them. However, they are less clear about what is meant by homophobic bullying and how to deal with it should it occur.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not leading to pupils making strong enough progress overall.
- Adults do not always have high enough expectations of all the pupils. Too little is expected sometimes,

particularly of the most-able pupils. As a result, they make slower progress than they are capable of.

- Teachers do not always get the level of challenge right for all groups of pupils. In some cases, the level of challenge is too difficult, leaving some pupils struggling. At other times, it is too easy, so that pupils are not stimulated to try hard.
- Adults who work with those who attend classes for their additional needs promote pupils' learning effectively. There is a high ratio of adults to pupils and this ensures that pupils receive the right amount of support to enable them to make good progress. For example, in one class for pupils of various ages in Key Stage 2, pupils learned to round numbers up or down. The quality of the questioning was effective, and one pupil exclaimed, 'Oh, I get it now!' This was typical of pupils' sense of achievement as they made gains in their learning.
- Writing is a relatively strong area of the school's performance, and this reflects a concerted effort over time to promote good writing across the school. Inspectors saw stimulating examples where pupils were enthused by the tasks and produced high-quality writing. In one Year 5 English lesson, for example, pupils were given the opportunity to write a persuasive letter on a topic they felt strongly about, such as the deforestation of the rain forest. This prompted some well-argued, concise openings to their letters.
- The school has a wide range of strategies designed to promote pupils' reading skills. These include reading to volunteers and even to a dog trained in listening patiently. These strategies have met with some success. However, reading remains a relatively weaker area of the school's overall performance. Guided reading tasks do not always promote good learning, particularly when groups of pupils are given insufficient guidance on how to improve.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are not promoted consistently well. In one Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teaching ensured that pupils' misconceptions were quickly corrected and that they were engaged and alert. However, this is not always the case. Pupils sometimes listen to lengthy explanations that do not apply to the task they are doing.
- Teaching assistants and support staff are deployed well in special classes for those with a range of additional needs. They know the pupils well and make sure that they are attentive and answer questions well. They help to promote their good learning. In mainstream classes, support staff are not always deployed well. Sometimes they spend quite lengthy periods listening to the class teacher, and are unable to make enough difference to the pupils' learning.
- The marking in pupils' English and mathematics books helps them to understand where they have gone wrong and how to improve.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because the proportion of pupils who make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics is lower than average. The progress of pupils from the wide range of heritages and backgrounds is lower than average.
- The proportion of most-able pupils who attain top grades is lower than average. This holds true for assessments taken at the end of Year 2 and for national tests taken at the end of Year 6. School figures, together with a scrutiny of pupils' current work throughout the school, confirm that this is continuing. Proportions making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics are lower than average.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for support from additional funding make good progress when compared with other pupils nationally. In 2014, for example, all the disadvantaged pupils made expected progress in their learning in writing and mathematics, whereas in the country as a whole, proportions were lower. In reading their achievement was similar to the national average.
- When it comes to attainment, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 generally did as well as other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013 and 2014. Reflecting their lower starting points at the end of Key Stage 1, their attainment was below that of other pupils nationally. They were around a year behind other pupils nationally in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, gaps were narrowing, and disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and a term behind in writing. School figures indicate that gaps are continuing to narrow, particularly in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have a range of special educational needs achieve well. They make the same or stronger progress than other pupils in the school. This is because the school is alert to their needs and provides effective support for them, particularly those who attend special classes within the school.
- Through patient teaching and well-planned tasks, children in the Willow Tree Nursery make good

progress in acquiring social and language skills.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because play and learning activities are not lively and diverse enough to promote good learning.
- The provision is led by a member of staff who does not teach in the Nursery and Reception classes. She works hard to support new members of staff and to plan for improvements in the provision. However, the outcomes are not effective, and this is because senior leaders do not lead and manage the early years provision rigorously enough.
- There are examples of strong teaching of language and number skills, particularly in the Nursery. For example, snack time was used effectively to stimulate children's number skills; adults placed pieces of fruit over numbers written on a sheet of paper and used the numbers to promote number recognition, and assist with simple subtraction. Such good practice, however, is not consistent across the provision. Language and number skills are not taught well enough, particularly in the Reception class.
- The materials and play resources that the children use are sometimes uninspiring. The school has identified improving resources as a development point in its planning. However, leaders have not acted with sufficient urgency. As a result, children's curiosity is not stimulated and they learn less eagerly than they ought.
- The outdoor play areas are cramped, particularly when shared by children across both classes. There are too few opportunities for children to explore a wide enough range of activities out of doors. For example, they do not have enough chances to learn to read, write or perform simple scientific experiments out in the open.
- Children behave well and are ready to share and take turns on the equipment. They play together harmoniously and are kept safe.
- Children make adequate progress from starting points that vary but are generally below those typical for their age. When they leave Reception and go into Year 1 their learning remains below that typical for their age.
- The Willow Tree Nursery, which has its own staff team, and is in a separate part of the building from the mainstream early years provision, is very different. It is a bright, welcoming environment. A huge amount of thought has gone into preparing resources that are inviting and exciting to children with severe and complex needs. Planning is impeccable. Detailed plans, appropriate to each child, ensure that children make strong progress in acquiring social and language skills. Much of the teaching is done through song, dance and rhyme, and this builds children's vocabulary and helps develop their speech. As a result the children are calm, curious and willing to learn.

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	135151
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	461677

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Cummings
Headteacher	Gillian Gandolfo
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2011
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