

Wilberforce Primary

Beethoven Street, London W10 4LB

Inspection dates

27–28 April 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Senior leaders do not have a clear vision of how they want to improve the school and how they are going to achieve their aims.
- Staff morale is low. There are divisions in the staff team which have resulted in a decline in the quality of provision.
- Frequent changes in staffing have resulted in inconsistencies, particularly in key stage 2 and the early years provision.
- Pupils' books show that, over time, progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2 requires improvement.
- Pupils do not attend school often enough and the school's strategies to address this have been unsuccessful.
- Leaders do not check the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' progress, especially in key stage 2, has slowed because leaders do not take action to improve weaker teaching.
- Teachers and other adults have low expectations of pupils in terms of both their behaviour and their learning. As a result, behaviour has declined and pupils' achievement has been affected.
- Behaviour in and out of lessons is poor. Pupils show a lack of respect for adults and talk over them in class. Low-level disruption is endemic.
- The number of serious behaviour incidents is very high and has not reduced. The school's strategies to improve behaviour are ineffective.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors, supported by the multi-academy trust have identified the decline in standards and have started to tackle these issues.
- Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and effective.
- Disadvantaged pupils in 2015 achieved as well as others in the school. The gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others currently in the school are not significant.
- A broad, balanced curriculum is in place, which provides for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils learn about safety and know how to keep themselves safe. They have the opportunity to take on responsibilities in school.
- Pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in the early years enjoy interesting activities both indoors and outdoors.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, managers and those responsible for governance should set a clear vision for the school's future that is communicated to and shared by leaders, members of staff, parents and pupils.
- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that the principal and senior leaders work together to develop a strong team ethos
 - supporting middle leaders to develop their knowledge and experience so that they can be held accountable for areas of the school's work.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and therefore pupils' outcomes, by:
 - developing a culture of high expectations which is clearly understood by adults and pupils
 - ensuring that leaders check the quality of teaching and take action to improve it
 - making sure that teachers use assessment information to precisely plan activities that will secure faster progress for groups of pupils
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are set challenging activities which enable them to reach their full potential.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils both in and out of lessons, by:
 - ensuring that a clear behaviour policy is in place, understood by pupils and consistently applied
 - reducing the number of serious behaviour incidents
 - eliminating low-level disruption in lessons
 - setting up and embedding routines that support the positive behaviour of pupils.
- Improve the attendance of pupils and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Weaknesses in senior leadership have led to divisions in the staff team. More members of staff have left the school than would normally be expected; staff absence is high. As a result, pupils have had a number of different teachers in this academic year, especially in key stage 2. Pupils openly admit that they behave less well for supply teachers.
- The capacity of senior leaders to secure improvements is compromised because they are not working together as a team. There is no clear direction set of where the school wants to be and how it is going to get there.
- Leaders' strategies to improve the attendance of pupils are having little impact. Pupils continue to be regularly absent from school, and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent continues to cause concern.
- The school's policy to secure good behaviour is not effective. Behaviour shows little improvement over time, and the number of recorded behaviour incidents is high.
- Leaders do not have a good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and do not take the necessary actions to improve it. Those leaders who carried out joint activities with inspectors made accurate comments regarding the strengths and weaknesses seen in practice.
- Middle leaders are keen and enthusiastic, but have lacked opportunities to take full responsibility for their area of work. They do not have a clear understanding of how their work links to whole-school priorities.
- Newly qualified teachers and those still in training are well-supported through professional development opportunities provided by the multi-academy trust. Some senior leaders make themselves available to these less experienced staff and provide good advice and support. There are few opportunities to observe good and better practice in this school because of the inconsistent practice and the high turnover of staff. Therefore, inspectors strongly recommend that the school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers at this time.
- Leaders work hard to involve parents in their child's learning and in the wider range of opportunities offered, such as language classes for parents. Most parents are pleased with the education their child receives at the school.
- The school's curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. A range of interesting themes are studied, with imaginative links made between subjects. The curriculum is enhanced through a range of trips and visitors to the school. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of what it means to be British. For example, pupils participated in art and writing activities to celebrate the Queen's recent 90th birthday.
- The school makes adequate provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum. Pupils take on responsibilities through an elected school council. The head boy and girl explained to an inspector how they have been involved in gathering the views of other pupils, and how they are passing on what they have learned to their successors. Teachers identify relevant current issues to tackle through assemblies and discussions. These include cyber bullying and the local community's response to incidents of violence in the area.
- Leaders have spent additional funding appropriately. The gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school is closing. Leaders know where some gaps remain, such as in the early years. The sports premium money has been spent well in order to extend the variety of sporting activities on offer.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors told inspectors about their concerns regarding the direction the school is taking. They know where the weaknesses lie. Governors have not shied away from tackling difficult issues and are working with the multi-academy trust to address these. For example, they commissioned a consultant to work with the school in the autumn term. Just prior to the inspection the multi-academy trust commissioned a consultant headteacher to work in the school part-time. The consultant headteacher supports the principal and other leaders as they strive to secure improvements in the school.
 - Governors make sure they receive accurate information about the achievement of pupils. They receive reports from a range of senior leaders, middle leaders and external consultants. They ask relevant questions to challenge leaders and visit the school to see its work for themselves.
 - The trust's scheme of delegation sets out clearly the responsibilities of trustees, senior officers employed by the trust, governors and the principal. This means that everyone understands who is responsible for the different aspects of the school's work.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that any concerns regarding pupils' welfare are followed up rigorously. They keep clear records of any discussions or meetings regarding specific cases, and work with parents and other professionals to ensure that pupils at risk are kept safe. The systems for checking the suitability of adults who work with pupils are robust. Leaders have made sure that the high number of supply staff working in the school in recent months have all been adequately checked. On the rare occasion that a pupil is placed in alternative provision, the designated safeguarding lead visits the placement to check that its safeguarding procedures are appropriate to meet the needs of the child concerned.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Despite having accurate assessment information, teachers do not consistently plan activities that are precisely focused on what groups of pupils need to learn next. As a result, sometimes the work is far too easy, and sometimes it is too hard.
- There is a lack of attention to detail in the delivery of some lessons. In Reception, children are split into several groups to learn phonics (the sounds that letters make). In some of these groups, children practice their sounds well, and adults are able to pick out pupils who need support in order to embed their learning. In other groups, children make slow progress because they cannot access the resources they need, for example when sound cards are held out of sight.
- Teachers and other adults do not consistently insist on high standards of behaviour in class. Pupils know that they can get away with chatting, talking while the teacher is giving instructions and shouting out answers. This distracts others from their learning and results in pupils not understanding what they are required to do.
- The system used by teachers to check the progress of pupils and to inform them about their next steps has lapsed in recent months. Pupils refer to this system when talking about improvements they need to make in their work. Until December 2015, pupils received helpful information about how well they were doing. Since January, however, this information has become sparse. As a result, pupils have not had up-to-date information on how well they are doing.
- There is a clear system in place to assess pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The multi-academy trust is extending this system to include other subjects, but this is not yet in place.
- Teachers meet regularly to review the progress of groups of pupils in each year group and identify any who need additional support. This support is then checked by leaders to ensure that these pupils catch up with their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Despite significant changes being made to the school site to ensure its security, some corners of the playground remain out of the sight of supervising adults. This means that pupils who are injured or in trouble in these areas find it difficult to get the help they need.
- Pupils learn about matters such as road safety and e-safety. They say they feel safe at school, and recognise the improvements made through changes to the building.
- Pupils know about the different forms of bullying and say that incidents have reduced. School records show that incidents of racist or sexist behaviour have reduced, but still happen occasionally.
- Pupils are self-confident and assured. The majority of pupils were at ease with inspectors and happy to share their experiences of school. Pupils can reflect on their behaviour and attitudes and recognise that they do not always try their best.
- Leaders have secure systems in place to identify and support any pupils who are vulnerable. These pupils are provided with support which effectively promotes their well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Persistent low-level disruption has become acceptable. Pupils continue to chat to their friends when the teacher asks them to listen. Teachers do not regularly insist that pupils pay attention before they instruct the class.

- Around school and during breaks pupils play boisterously. They do not use equipment such as skipping ropes appropriately. Pupils run in and out of the building unchecked. The lack of a structured routine at the end of break results in a crowd of pupils all trying to enter the large key stage 2 building at the same time, causing congestion in doorways.
- Systems for tackling challenging behaviour are ineffective. There is a clear process for the recording of behaviour incidents. This system describes different types of inappropriate behaviours, which are rated as low, medium or high level. The number of behaviour incidents recorded by members of staff is extremely high. In the week prior to the inspection, one class had 47 incidents recorded involving 12 pupils. Seven of these incidents were judged to be of medium or high severity. These numbers are not uncommon across different classes and times of year. There has been some reduction in the frequency of high level incidents over time.
- Pupils are missing out on education because they do not attend school often enough. In 2015, around one pupil in 20 was persistently absent. Overall attendance figures are also declining and are well below the national average.
- Many, but not all, of the pupils spoken to by inspectors were courteous and welcoming. They understand how to behave appropriately and can say what kinds of behaviour are not acceptable.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for current pupils in key stage 2 require improvement. Too few pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of the academic year. Pupils' poor behaviour and inconsistent teaching have resulted in a slowing of progress.
- Pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education, but recognise that there are some areas where they still need to catch up.
- In 2015, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who made expected progress in reading was average, but more than average in writing and mathematics. The proportion making more than expected progress in reading and writing was just above average, but below average in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils in this cohort achieved as well as others in the school, demonstrating that the gap in their progress had closed.
- The most able pupils do not consistently receive work that stretches them to achieve as much as they should. As a result, they become bored and contribute to the low-level disruption that is evident in classrooms.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is tracked carefully by leaders. Leaders know exactly what support each of these pupils is receiving and what impact it is having. However, pupils who have special educational needs or disability experience the same inconsistency in teaching as their peers and some are making too little progress.
- In key stage 1 the picture is more positive. The proportion of pupils on track to reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics is increasing. This demonstrates good progress.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 who reached the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. Disadvantaged pupils in this cohort did as well as their classmates. The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics in both 2014 and 2015 was high.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Leadership of the early years provision lacks coherence. Senior leaders have a good understanding of pupils' progress in the early years. The newly appointed early years leader, who teachers in Nursery, has not had sufficient opportunity to develop knowledge or understanding of what is happening in Reception classes.
- Leaders assess the outcomes of pupils in the early years accurately. Pupils enter the Nursery and Reception lacking some of the knowledge and skills which are typical for their age. They make reasonable progress and in 2014 and 2015 around two thirds reached a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- The day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress, however, is not precisely focused on particular areas of learning or what the next steps are for specific groups of pupils. This means that adults do not plan activities that are pinpointed on what pupils need to learn next.

- Adults plan a wide variety of activities that are inviting and attractive to pupils, both indoors and outdoors. However, they do not clearly identify opportunities within these activities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Some routines within the early years do not instil high expectations for behaviour. For example, not all the groups in Reception classes respond quickly to instructions from adults.
- Some adults interact well with pupils, asking questions which engage their interest and promote learning. For example, they take opportunities to develop pupils' counting skills counting both forwards and backwards.
- The early years curriculum is broad and covers all the required aspects. Pupils are appropriately prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders make sure that all the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage are met, including those relating to safeguarding.

School details

Unique reference number	139824
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	10011703

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	322
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Capewell
Principal	Ann Sheppard
Telephone number	020 7641 5865
Website	www.wilberforceprimary.org
Email address	admin@wilberforceprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Wilberforce Primary converted to academy status in September 2013 and is part of the United Learning Trust.
- Wilberforce Primary is slightly larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is much higher than average, and more than four out of five speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with no group being in the majority.
- The proportion of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs or disability is higher than average, but only a few have a statement of educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes involving most teachers. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders. While in lessons they spoke to pupils about their work and looked at their books.
- Observations were carried out during breaks and lunchtimes, and as pupils moved around the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, governors and the academy trust's head of primary school improvement. They also met with groups of staff, including middle leaders, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding, checks made on the quality of teaching and information about the progress pupils make. They also looked at records of the contribution made by governors and the academy trust.
- Alongside senior leaders, inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors took into account 20 responses to the staff questionnaire and 11 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.

Inspection team

Gaynor Roberts, lead inspector

Gary Rawlings

Jenell Chetty

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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