

Castilion Primary School

Copperfield Road, Thamesmead, London SE28 8QA

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well across the school. Their progress in reading, writing and mathematics is typically good.
- Teaching is strong. Lessons are interesting and exciting. Staff explain things well, so that the pupils understand clearly.
- Occasionally, lessons are not fully challenging, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Leaders recognise that more pupils could attain the higher standard in national testing in Years 2 and 6 than is the case.
- Children make a positive start in the early years classes. Staff ensure that children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The school makes strong provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and these pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are happy at school. They behave well in lessons, and at playtimes. They enjoy taking responsibility. They feel safe and secure, as they are well cared for and safeguarded by the staff.
- The school is very purposefully and caringly led by the headteacher and all other leaders.
- Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum that builds their confidence and promotes their enjoyment of different subjects. Leaders and staff do not fully check, however, how well pupils achieve in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from extra help tailored to their needs. As a result, these pupils are making stronger progress than was the case in the past. Sometimes, however, leaders and staff do not check with sufficient rigour whether extra help is strengthening pupils' progress as well as it could.
- Although pupils show pride in their work, they do not consistently present it neatly and tidily.
- The governing body does a solid, methodical job in holding the school to account.
- The parents and carers who met with inspectors like the school. They feel welcomed and rightly say that their children's learning and well-being are good. They see Castilion as 'one big family'.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders check how well pupils acquire subject-specific skills and knowledge in subjects beyond English and mathematics and take effective steps to improve teaching in the light of the evidence they find.
- Leaders evaluate the use of the pupil premium funding precisely and ensure that the work of staff is sharply focused on strengthening the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- Ensure that teaching provides demanding tasks, where needed, to stretch the knowledge and understanding of pupils showing high aptitude, including for children in early years.
- Ensure that pupils routinely present their work neatly and tidily.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher creates a calm and very purposeful atmosphere. He and the deputy headteacher lead clearly and with gentleness. They successfully encourage staff and pupils to give their best. This builds what some parents describe fairly as a 'loving community'.
- All senior leaders have clear moral purpose in their work, and promote high standards effectively. They are ambitious and want the very best for all of their pupils.
- Leaders evaluate the school honestly and accurately. Their evaluations are well linked to the suitably targeted school development plan. Leaders have high-quality information about pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Where there are any problems, they usually find practical and effective solutions quickly. They have taken swift action to improve pupils' writing across the school, after a small dip in key stage 2 outcomes last year.
- Middle leaders do sterling work in developing the provision in all subjects. Consequently, the school has a broad and very interesting curriculum. Each week, pupils do rich activities, such as making models, exploring outside, playing guitars, acting, swimming and joining in with team games. They like the wide range of well-attended clubs, productions, visitors to the school, and outings, including residential visits. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Leaders know little in detail, however, about how well the pupils are doing in the subjects beyond English and mathematics. In subjects other than English and mathematics, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and the curriculum focus on pupils' enjoyment of different subjects and whether pupils develop social skills, such as teamwork. However, leaders know little in detail about whether pupils are making progress in subject-specific knowledge and understanding. This prevents leaders from targeting improvements precisely.
- Leadership and staffing are stable. Staff feel well supported and like working at the school. Senior leaders keep a careful eye on the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. They provide staff with well-targeted support, including training opportunities, to help them think about and improve their teaching skills.
- Leaders manage the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities very well. The school provides a range of valuable extra support to help these pupils' learning. Staff check carefully how well the pupils are doing.
- Leaders have made considerable improvements in the use of pupil premium funding, which is effective. The needs of the disadvantaged pupils concerned are well identified and known to staff. However, the school's evaluation does not show clearly and sharply how much difference the pupil premium makes to these pupils' achievements.
- The school spends the physical education and sport premium thoughtfully. As a result, pupils experience a wide range of positive physical activity.
- The school welcomes and uses well impartial external advice. The Amadeus Academy Trust provides some of this on behalf of the local authority.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is suitably organised. Its work is thorough. Its members are supportive of the moral purpose shown by the senior leaders, while also asking them challenging questions.
- Governors check carefully that the school safeguards pupils correctly. They also make suitable arrangements for the timely performance management of staff, including that of the headteacher.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel very safe and well cared for.
- Leaders provide an effective and regular programme of staff training. New members of staff receive it immediately, and it is regularly updated for all. All staff therefore know their roles in child protection and preventing abuse. Staff are well trained in their different roles, such as those of fire marshal and first aider.
- The safeguarding policy is clear and comprehensive. The school's procedures on child protection are correct and thorough. Leaders' checks on staff and other adults who may have contact with pupils are carried out and recorded in a timely and proper way. Emergency drills and risk assessments are done appropriately, including for the many visits pupils make off site.
- The school suitably protects pupils from risks associated with extremism and radicalisation. Through the curriculum, pupils develop a sound understanding of British values and what they should do if they encounter intolerant or extreme views.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is clear and purposeful. Much of it is exciting and fun. It leads to good understanding by pupils. For instance, in one lesson, pupils enjoyed acting out the biblical parable of the wise man and the foolish man, asking pertinent questions of each other in role. They began to appreciate the deeper meaning of the story.
- Teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and relevant, showing their secure subject knowledge. For example, in a mathematics activity related to the football World Cup, pupils enjoyed researching online the costs of hotels and transport in Russia, so that they could price up a holiday there. Staff were careful to ensure that the pupils applied their recent mathematical learning in order to deepen their knowledge and skills.
- Staff set homework that pupils and parents find useful. Pupils make some choices about what they do in different subjects, to follow their interests.
- Parents value highly the support provided to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They say that the school addresses specific needs quickly and helps pupils to learn well. Inspection evidence supports these views. Staff also support effectively those pupils who speak English as an additional language and these pupils achieve well.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Teachers and teaching assistants

explain things and ask questions of the pupils skilfully to build and deepen their understanding. Teaching is usually well matched to the needs of the pupils, which staff assess carefully in English and mathematics.

- Occasionally, however, some teaching is not challenging enough, especially for higher attaining pupils. Sometimes, activities limit pupils from producing work at the standard of which they are capable. For example, teachers sometimes stop the whole class to make a point, which causes pupils who already understand it to lose momentum in their work. Pupils are on occasion kept in spelling groups for too long when the spellings are easy for them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show good levels of well-being, self-esteem and enthusiasm for life and learning. The school's engaging curriculum helps with this. They understand clearly at the appropriate levels how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when they are online.
- Bullying is rare and generally dealt with well by staff. Pupils and parents notice this clearly.
- Pupils understand and follow the school's clear and positive values. They demonstrate good and accepting attitudes towards people who may be different from themselves.
- The school helps pupils effectively who need personal support. Staff offer pupils a friendly ear, or more formal counselling when needed. On-site provision, such as the school's gardens and pets, is well used by adults to calm and reassure pupils. Play leaders organise well-chosen playground games for those pupils who find unstructured play difficult. Staff involve and work with external agencies carefully and effectively when needed. Parents are very pleased with the level of support and care given to their children.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well and safely around the school and when playing together. They say that they have lots of friends in school. They are polite, friendly and kind. In lessons, pupils are keen and ready to learn. They listen and concentrate well, and are very willing to help each other.
- The attendance of pupils is high and has been consistently so for many years. It is carefully monitored and checked. Pupils are mainly punctual to school and lessons. The number of exclusions is low.
- Parents and pupils are very pleased with the new system for encouraging good behaviour. This was set up in response to the views of pupils. It includes sending home to parents online information about when their children have behaved well, or if there have been any problems. This is motivating and successful in encouraging pupils' good behaviour.

- This revised behaviour policy also provides clear and effective systems under which occasional examples of disruptive behaviour are addressed suitably.
- Occasionally, pupils are unduly noisy in lessons and in the school hall at lunchtimes, which can be distracting. Staff manage such occurrences effectively.
- Pupils often present their work neatly, but there are too many lapses which are not always followed up by staff. Their handwriting and letter formation are sometimes untidy. Diagrams and drawings (such as shapes in mathematics) are too often drawn imprecisely and without a ruler.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the 2017 national assessments, Year 6 pupils' results dropped slightly from those of previous years. Pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. However, a below-average proportion of pupils reached the higher standard. Similarly, in Year 2, more pupils might have reached the higher standard.
- Across the school now, after considerable work by staff, pupils' writing is of a consistently high standard. Their progress is good. Pupils have suitable opportunities to write in depth and in assorted styles. They are just as good at writing a report, or a description, as a story, for instance. They use interesting vocabulary. Generally, their use of spelling and grammar rules is correct and developing well.
- In mathematics and reading, pupils' achievement across year groups is also strong. Rightly, they are pleased with what they have learned. One older pupil said, 'I have done better than I ever dreamed possible.'
- Pupils show good knowledge of phonics and use this well to sound out and read words. This is reflected in pupils' attainment in the phonics screening check, which is above the national average. Pupils' comprehension of the texts they read is also strong. They enjoy the school's reading quizzes and rewards, which help promote strong attitudes towards reading.
- Pupils demonstrated to inspectors good general knowledge and interest in subjects right across the curriculum. They show understanding of diverse things, such as Ancient Egypt, computer programming, painting pictures, outdoor learning, musical listening, and scientific exploration. They make links between subjects; for instance, that the school value of 'unity' has the same linguistic root as the French number 'un'. However, leaders and staff have limited information about pupils' knowledge and understanding in these subjects and how these might be improved further.
- Children do well in early years. Consistently, a higher than average proportion of children attain a good level of development by the end of Reception Year.
- The school is consistently successful in preparing its pupils for their next steps and stages, including the move to secondary school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress, achieving as well as their classmates. The outcomes of disadvantaged pupils entitled to pupil premium funding are improving.
- The school has worked successfully to address the needs of a number of Year 3 pupils

who have underachieved in earlier year groups. These pupils are starting to catch up well.

Early years provision

Good

- The Nursery and Reception classes are well organised. Children take part in effective learning activities in a stimulating environment, indoors and out.
- Teaching is consistently strong. Staff assess children carefully and make sure that the lessons and tasks are well suited to children's needs and interests. Staff use probing questioning to extend children's thinking. For example, in an exciting activity about potions, children produced some thoughtful writing after adults helped them to say for themselves what the potions might look and taste like.
- Most children move into Reception from Nursery. This transition is managed well. In the summer, there is sometimes an 'open gate' between the classes, to allow Nursery children to get used to the Reception facilities. Learning is well dovetailed between Nursery and Reception. For instance, the programme of phonics teaching builds children's understanding of letters and sounds systematically.
- Children make good progress in all areas of learning from their starting points. Children's early writing, reading and number skills are well developed. They are well prepared to succeed in Year 1 and beyond.
- Early years is well led. Adults are well trained and supported in their roles. Staff are held fully to account for the learning and progress of the children.
- Children behave well. They are kind and thoughtful. They learn to take turns readily and develop good dispositions, such as extended concentration. Resources and exciting learning areas, such as the sandpit, are readily available for children to use and explore.
- Staff care for and safeguard the children closely. Routines and systems are well established. For example, in the hot days of the inspection, drinks of water were readily available.
- Sometimes, staff could do more to promote still more advanced learning for children who are ready for it. Occasionally, activities could be more challenging, particularly for higher attaining children.

School details

Unique reference number	101444
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10047383

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Kashoro
Headteacher	Mr S Pepperrell
Telephone number	0208 311 5177
Website	www.castilion.bexley.sch.uk
Email address	admin@castilion.bexley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 July 2010

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average primary school, with a part-time Nursery class. It was judged outstanding at its last inspection. The headteacher has changed since then.
- Fewer than one in five pupils are entitled to pupil premium funding, which supports disadvantaged pupils. This is below the national average.
- A small proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across all year groups, some jointly with senior leaders. They observed around the school during play- and lunchtimes, out-of-school hours activities and during assemblies.
- They looked at samples of pupils' work, particularly in writing.
- They held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, the chair of governors and many members of staff. They spoke with an external adviser the school uses. They met with pupils formally and informally and heard pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read.
- Inspectors evaluated documents, including minutes of meetings, evaluations, the school development plan, assessments of pupils, and records of attendance and behaviour.
- They met with parents and took account of the 17 responses on Parent View, which is Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Pratt	Ofsted Inspector
Sherlyn Ramsay	Ofsted Inspector

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