

De Beauvoir Primary School

Tottenham Road, London, N1 4BZ

Inspection dates 13–14 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from starting points that are generally low to achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Teachers have embraced the carefully targeted programmes the new leadership team has offered them and this is contributing to their individual performance being further fine tuned.
- Pupils are keen to learn and respond well to the clear guidance adults give them during lessons on how to improve their work.
- Pupils are happy to come to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.
- Pupils behave well. The new behaviour management system is applied consistently and has had a major impact on improving the behaviour of the minority of pupils who have particular behavioural needs. There are rigorous systems in place to ensure all pupils are safe.
- Senior leaders have built on the improvements made by their predecessors and have lost no time in accelerating the rate at which those improvements are taking place.
- Leaders, including governors, monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement rigorously and have put in place a range of measures to support teachers in improving their practice.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough to ensure pupils make rapid and sustained progress throughout all year groups.
- Teachers do not always ask more complex questions that move learning on to a deeper level and encourage pupils' independence.
- Comments in marking, and the opportunities that pupils have to respond to these comments in lessons, are less effective in mathematics than in English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons or parts of lessons, including the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent) and guided reading. Nearly all the teaching staff were observed.
- Inspectors attended assemblies, performances and coffee mornings for parents. They listened to pupils read and held meetings with staff, pupils and representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the on-line Parent View survey, as well as other communications from parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work in lessons as well as the work pupils have completed over time in their books.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, data relating to pupils' performance, logs relating to behaviour and the attendance figures.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Capron	Additional Inspector
Paula Protherough	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are more than double the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked after children, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is much higher than the national average.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with 15 different groups represented in varying proportions. Over half of the pupils in the school speak English as an additional language, some of whom are at the early stages of learning English.
- An exceptionally high number of pupils join and leave the school at other than the usual entry times.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There has been a high turnover of staff since the previous inspection, including a significant change of leadership in summer 2012.
- The school is currently in a partnership with an outstanding school and is led by an executive headteacher and a head of school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make rapid and sustained progress in all subjects by:
 - ensuring the marking of pupils' books, especially in mathematics, always includes useful comments to help pupils improve their work and that pupils have opportunities to respond to these comments in lessons
 - ensuring teachers sharpen their questioning to promote deeper learning and encourage pupils to think more independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are often much lower than those expected for their age. Provision has improved since the previous inspection so the proportion of pupils reaching age-related expectations at the end of Reception has risen year on year.
- Progress is monitored rigorously so that any pupils whose performance dips are identified quickly and measures put in place to get them back on track. Consequently, most pupils make at least the expected progress across Key Stage 2 and the proportion of pupils who make more than the expected progress is high compared with the national figures.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teachers plan lessons that focus on developing specific skills across a range of subjects.
- By the time pupils leave the school, at the end of Year 6, their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly in line with the national figures and is rising. From their starting points, they achieve well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Their progress is carefully tracked and the innovative use of technology, such as tablet computers for writing projects, effectively supports their learning.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. The needs of those at the early stages of learning English are met extremely well because teachers use a range of strategies to enable them to master English quickly, including personalised dictionaries and the careful deployment of bilingual staff.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve well because the school uses the funding provided effectively. For example, the daily reading support in Year 1 is extremely effective in rapidly accelerating progress in reading skills because extra adults are funded by the pupil premium to support targeted pupils.
- The school has successfully closed the gaps in attainment between different groups because it is committed to ensuring all pupils have an equal chance of gaining success.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most of the teaching is good, but not enough of it is outstanding to ensure that pupils make the rapid and sustained progress necessary to raise standards further.
- Senior leaders have streamlined the teaching of phonics so it is more effective. Staff pronounce sounds carefully and teach the correct way to shape letters. This, added to activities that are stimulating and meaningful, ensures pupils make good gains in their reading. For example, children in Reception made outstanding progress in reading simple words because they really wanted to create word 'baubles' for the class Christmas tree.
- Guided reading is well organised. Teachers support groups well with challenging questions that help unlock exciting and stimulating texts and develop pupils' reading skills. Pupils clearly understand and benefit from the activities set out for independent work.
- Writing is also taught well. In Year 6, teachers have been working on poetry and pupils were able to explain similes and metaphors to inspectors using technically correct language. They produced work of a very high standard because teachers had paced the learning well across the week and used an evocative range of stimuli to prompt pupils' thinking.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and stop to clarify the task where necessary, which ensures all pupils succeed. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher realised that pupils were not using the best strategy to estimate their answer. She asked the class a few probing questions, which helped pupils to consolidate their understanding of the underlying concept. This ensured they all went on to make good progress in using their mathematical skills.
- Teachers are good at asking questions that create opportunities for pupils to explain their

understanding. However, questioning does not always prompt pupils to think more deeply so that they make connections across areas of learning and begin to develop their own, independent ideas about the subject at hand.

- Pupils understand the marking system and say that it helps them to know what they have done well and how to improve their work. Teachers make comments that guide pupils to specific improvements and pupils are usually given the time to respond during the school day. This cycle has proved very effective in creating a personalised dialogue between teacher and pupil which clearly results in good progress. However, when looking through books, inspectors found that this happens less effectively in mathematics than it does in English.
- Teachers create opportunities for pupils to practise their communication and mathematical skills across a range of subjects. For example, pupils had produced very detailed written reports about the Vikings and were using computers to turn their work into animated books with voice overs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in and around the school. For example, they walk up and down the stairs almost silently because they understand that others may be working.
- Playtimes are happy. Pupils observe school rules and routines well, as for example when they put their plates away tidily at lunchtimes and line up quickly and quietly at the end of play.
- Attendance is good because pupils enjoy coming to school, and the school works well with parents to ensure there is a clear understanding of how important it is to attend regularly.
- Pupils say they feel safe and the parents who completed the on-line Parent View survey agree. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and they cite the posters that remind them about internet safety as being particularly useful.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to the teacher and make the most of opportunities to evaluate how well they have met their learning objectives.
- Relationships in class are good and this ensures pupils feel confident to ask for help when they do not understand.
- Pupils say behaviour has improved tremendously because of 'the zeal of the new headteacher'. A new, computerised system allows teachers to allot points for particularly pleasing behaviour. Pupils respond well to this because they can see their points being added on the screen.
- Pupils say that bullying, on the rare occasions it occurs, is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Parents had no concerns about bullying. The wide range of cultures that pupils come from is celebrated and pupils cite this as the reason there is no name calling.
- The appointment of a pastoral support worker has made a big difference to pupils with particular behavioural needs. He has rationalised systems for recording behavioural incidents and this has enabled the school to identify problems and provide solutions, thereby reducing the instances of fixed-term exclusions.
- The pastoral support worker has also supported teachers in managing challenging behaviour well in their classes, which has had a positive impact, enabling identified pupils to make faster progress in their learning and to manage their own behaviour more effectively.

The leadership and management are good

- Members of the new leadership team have a remarkable sense of ambition and drive and have injected a new vigour into staff and pupils alike.
- Teachers feel extremely well supported in developing their professional skills and this has helped them to elicit greater progress from their pupils.
- Teachers' performance is managed well and the quality of teaching is monitored carefully. Teachers have individual targets that relate to the progress of specific pupils and it is clear that meeting those targets determines whether pay increases are awarded.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development and

prioritise their planning accordingly.

- Pupils share and value each other's cultures. Doing so not only creates a strong sense of community, but enriches the cultural development of all concerned.
- The recently introduced system of restorative justice, which encourages pupils to discuss issues where there have been disagreements or conflict, is a formidable tool for ensuring that there is no discrimination and that pupils make carefully considered moral choices and develop the range of social skills needed to move on to the next phase of their education.
- There are moments of awe and wonder throughout the school day, for example looking at stunning photographs of snowscapes to encourage poetry writing or watching with delight as glittering ice melts and words, frozen into the bottom of moulds filled with coloured water, appear. These activities are supplemented with visits from leaders of different faiths and opportunities for personal reflection to ensure that the school promotes pupils' spiritual development well.
- Working in partnership with an outstanding school is proving highly beneficial. The executive headteacher and head of school bring valuable experience of how to secure rapid improvements and use existing strengths to build stronger and more expert teams in both schools.
- The local authority has every confidence in the new leadership team and provides light-touch support as appropriate to this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has benefited from some experienced members joining recently. This has prompted an audit of skills to ensure governors are using their expertise for maximum effect. For example, some members are skilled at analysing data and use this talent to ask searching questions of the leadership team about pupils' progress. Systems are in place to ensure all statutory training is up to date. Governors monitor thoroughly how the pupil premium funding is spent. For example, they know that a specialist mathematics programme results in pupils in Key Stage 1 making a year's worth of progress in a term, so they have agreed that it should continue to be financed from this designated funding. Governors support the school's salary and appraisal policy and understand the link between excellence of performance and financial reward. The panel that agrees pay increases looks at a range of evidence, largely connected to pupils' progress, before making a decision and will not approve a rise where performance is lacking. Safeguarding procedures are thorough.

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	100224
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	400400

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	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ed Price
Headteacher	Sandra James (Head of School), Sarah Bailey (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 February 2010
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