

Longlands Primary School

Woodside Road, Bexley, DA15 7JG

Inspection dates

29–30 January 2013

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Requires improvement | 3 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good enough. Tasks in lessons are sometimes too easy or too hard for pupils and this slows their progress.
- The rate of pupils' progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 varies too much to make sure enough pupils achieve well.
- Teachers' questioning is not always thorough enough and pupils do not get sufficient chances to work independently or collaboratively to use and apply their skills without direction from an adult.
- On more than rare occasions, small numbers of pupils do not behave well enough in lessons and at other times in the school day. While overall the school is orderly, a significant minority of pupils and parents do not believe behaviour is good enough.
- Not all staff consistently use agreed systems and strategies for managing pupils' behaviour.
- Action taken by senior and middle leaders to improve the quality of teaching has not secured enough good or better quality practice. When observing lessons, leaders do not pay close enough attention to how well different pupils are learning.
- Leaders do not always check carefully or quickly enough whether the action they have taken to promote improvements is making enough difference, for example to lift achievement for pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is demonstrating that it has the capacity to improve. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection.
- The drive to raise standards in writing across the school has been particularly successful.
- Support from the local authority has helped the governing body to play an effective role in making sure that the school improves.
- Teachers' marking regularly shows pupils how to improve their work. Pupils understand their next step targets and teachers make their expectations clear in lessons.
- The large majority of pupils try to work hard in lessons and are keen to do well. The school has recently introduced systems to improve inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Their attendance has improved considerably and is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 23 lessons across all 11 classes, including seven jointly with the headteacher.
- They examined pupils’ work alongside the headteacher and talked with pupils about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors also held discussions with parents, staff, school leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- They took account of 47 responses to the online survey (Parent View), as well as a small number of letters addressed for the attention of the inspection team. They also analysed 17 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and reviewed a range of the school’s documentation, including information about the progress of pupils currently in school, the school’s own monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, records of behaviour and incidents, safeguarding documentation and the minutes of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mirella Lombardo

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Wollaston

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding) is lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The governing body is responsible for the school's breakfast club provision. The after-school club is managed by a private provider and was not part of this inspection.
- For the first time this year, the school has made use of alternative provision off site for a very small number of pupils.
- The school is imminently to move a number of classes into new accommodation following an extensive programme of rebuilding and renovation. For over a year, the school has been operating with reduced space, both internally and externally.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all year groups and enables pupils in all years to maximise their achievement by:
 - making sure the level of challenge is right for all pupils in all lessons
 - reducing the time spent in lessons with the whole class doing the same tasks under the direction of the teacher or support staff
 - using questioning effectively to explore pupils' misconceptions or wrong answers to ensure their accurate understanding and move their learning forward when ready
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to work independently or collaboratively together and to use and apply their skills in investigative and open-ended tasks.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by:
 - more frequently and rigorously checking the impact of the actions taken to bring about improvement, including strategies to eradicate underachievement for pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding
 - focusing rigorously on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils when observing lessons
 - tightening the procedures for setting next steps for teachers to improve the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress
 - involving middle leaders more fully in the drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Make sure that all staff consistently use agreed systems and strategies for managing and promoting pupils' positive behaviour, and carry out rigorous checks to see if they are working.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Not enough pupils make consistently good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in some year groups are achieving well in reading and writing, but making slower progress in mathematics. At other times, this pattern is reversed.
- Since the previous inspection, attainment has risen at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils typically leave the school in Year 6 having reached broadly average levels of attainment. In 2012, Year 6 pupils' attainment was significantly above average, which reflects their above average starting points as they entered Key Stage 2.
- Progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is variable. Pupils supported at school action do not always make enough progress to reduce the gap in their achievement with their peers. Pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs usually make good progress and achieve very well over time. They receive effective individual support in lessons by skilled teaching assistants. It is too soon to evaluate how well the alternative provision is reducing underachievement for the very small number of pupils attending.
- Previously, pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding have underachieved. In 2012, their average points score, a measure of their average level of attainment, was 24.6. This compares with an average of 31.1 for all other pupils, placing them approximately two years behind their peers. Teachers are now keeping a much closer check on how well these pupils are doing in all classes. The gap is closing for the majority, but there is still more to do to secure equal opportunities for all of them as they move on to the next stage of their education. That said, while still uneven, there are signs that progress is accelerating.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well. The school's own assessments show that a significant proportion of children start school with a lower level of knowledge, understanding and skills than typically expected for their age. They are taught well and catch up quickly. The good progress made in their Reception Year means that most children transfer to Year 1 working at or above an age-appropriate level.
- As pupils move through the school they make steady progress in developing their numeracy skills, as well as gaining a sound grasp of other areas of mathematics such as shape and measures. However, they do not have enough opportunities to solve problems or use these skills in other subjects.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Younger pupils are developing a secure knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and use this to help them with their reading and writing. Pupils in Year 1 scored above average in the most recent national phonics screening check. Lower ability pupils use phonics to read unfamiliar words, although at times still rely more heavily on clues from the pictures.
- Pupils' progress in writing has particularly accelerated. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn how to write in different ways for different purposes and their stamina for writing at length builds well. In 2012, pupils reached significantly above average standards in writing at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching does not consistently meet the needs of all pupils well enough to secure good or better progress. Teachers tend to keep the whole class together doing the same tasks for too long. Consequently, pupils have fewer opportunities to use and apply their skills working independently or collaboratively.
- Where teachers do set different tasks for pupils, they do not always match these closely enough to their needs. In some lessons, more-able pupils finish quickly and spend time waiting for others to catch up; while less-able pupils struggle because the task does not support or make

clear what they are actually supposed to be learning and is too challenging.

- Lessons mostly build well on pupils' prior learning. Teachers' questioning often prompts pupils to make these links. In an English lesson in Year 6, the teacher compiled a clear list of requirements pupils had to meet to succeed in the task (success criteria). Across the school, teachers use success criteria well to make their expectations clear to everyone.
- In the better lessons, pupils remain engaged and enthused by activities and teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning. In a mathematics lesson in Year 3, when a pupil offered the wrong answer, the teacher asked questions to explore the misunderstanding and enabled pupils to learn from it. At other times, teachers miss these opportunities, or do not ask the right questions to deepen pupils' understanding or extend their knowledge.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective because adults judge precisely when to support children, or to extend their learning with extra challenges. Children have good opportunities to use and apply their developing literacy and numeracy skills and growing vocabulary. They have a clear understanding of what they are learning when engaged in activities not directed by an adult and are confident to make choices and show independence.
- Teachers' marking is effective in moving pupils forward in their learning. Pupils look carefully at what teachers have written and try hard to follow this advice in subsequent work. This has been particularly effective in accelerating progress in writing, where marking tends to be strongest. Pupils have a good understanding of their next step targets and these are used well in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour outside of lessons is regularly quite physical, and sometimes rough. Staff and pupils report that this is often 'play-fighting', but it does sometimes cause upsets. Pupils say that adults attempt to deal with issues, but they are not always confident that non-teaching staff fully resolve incidents. Inspection evidence confirms this view.
- On more than rare occasions, a small minority of pupils do not remain on task in lessons, which means they do not make as much progress as they could. While classrooms are generally calm and orderly, and disruptions may be brief, a number of pupils report that they experience interruptions due to others talking or calling out. The large majority of pupils are keen to do well and usually respond quickly to the teacher.
- Nearly a quarter of parents responding to the on-line survey disagreed or strongly disagreed that the school deals effectively with bullying. The school has recently introduced new systems to log behaviour and bullying incidents, although as yet there is no analysis or rigorous evaluation of these. Nonetheless, taking into account the full range of evidence, while bullying does sometimes occur, it is not frequent. The school does not tolerate discrimination, and tackles any rare racist incidents robustly.
- Most pupils demonstrate good manners and show respect to adults and their peers. Pupils are keen to take on extra responsibilities, for example as school councillors or peer mediators.
- Many pupils demonstrate a pride in their work, taking care with their handwriting and presentation. Though not always consistent, most pupils are supportive and encouraging of each other. The spontaneous applause of a Year 4 class in response to a pupil reading aloud their writing is just one example of this.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Most parents agree. The school teaches pupils well about how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, from using the road to using the internet.
- The school has been very successful in its drive to improve attendance. Recent years have shown a strongly improving trend and attendance is currently beginning to rise above average levels.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Strategies to improve teaching are not rigorous enough. Although the headteacher reports that areas for improvement following lesson observations are agreed verbally, they are not written down on the monitoring record. Therefore, it is not possible to track any resulting impact. There are no formal written records for the current academic year of middle leaders' visits to lessons. When observing lessons, leaders do not focus sufficiently closely on the learning of different pupils to inform their judgement about the effectiveness of teaching.
- Despite this, considering the full range of inspection evidence, leaders are demonstrating the capacity to improve. Self-evaluation and action planning processes are effective in moving the school forward. While there is more work to do in ironing out the variations in pupils' achievement, there are evident improvements in important areas including some aspects of teaching, such as marking. Staff are strongly supportive of leaders and work well as a team.
- Support from the local authority has made an important contribution to getting the school on the right track and securing its capacity to improve. Especially in the early stages following the previous inspection, advisors worked closely with the governing body, and alongside leaders to establish robust systems to keep a close check on the achievement of pupils. The assessment leader is competently continuing this work. Teachers now have accurate information about the pupils in their classes in danger of falling behind and have made a positive start in monitoring their progress.
- The school has employed a number of strategies to improve relationships with parents, including creating a Parents' Forum. However, leaders have no formal evaluation or survey from the current academic year to confirm their view that parental satisfaction is increasing. Most parents responding to Parent View reported that their children are happy at school, and they would recommend the school to another parent. However, nearly a quarter of parents do not believe that the school is well led and managed, and just over fifth do not feel that the school responds well to their concerns.
- The breadth of subjects pupils study provides opportunities for them to build their academic skills and enables their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A range of trips and visitors to the school and opportunities in music and sport enhance pupils' education. With the exception of writing, pupils do not have frequent enough opportunities to use and apply their skills in open-ended or investigative tasks.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Concerted and successful action taken by the governing body to increase its effectiveness has resulted in a strong sense of purpose and accountability. Additional training has ensured that governors increasingly ask leaders challenging questions in their shared drive to secure improvements. A thorough understanding of how to use the range of data available to compare the school's performance against national benchmarks has enhanced this. The school has used pupil premium funding to contribute towards a range of strategies, from supporting access to the breakfast club to additional booster class provision. Although on the next meeting agenda, the governing body has yet to evaluate the current achievement of these pupils. The governing body considers regular information provided by the headteacher about the quality of teaching, alongside information from their own visits and pupil progress reports. Performance management procedures overseen by the governing body, including use of new teaching standards, do not permit automatic pay progression. Governors consider appropriately summarised and anonymous information about the outcomes of staff appraisals. Safeguarding requirements are met.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 101429 |
| Local authority | Bexley |
| Inspection number | 404757 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 308 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Malcolm Chambers |
| Headteacher | Fiona Dear |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16–17 March 2011 |
| Telephone number | 020 8300 2368 |
| Fax number | 020 8302 0540 |
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