

Mayplace Primary School

Woodside Road, Barnehurst, Bexley, Kent, DA7 6EQ

Inspection dates 12–13 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils are not making fast enough progress in Years 1 to 6. Pupils' attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching quality is not consistently good across the school and too much teaching still requires improvement. This is why it is not leading to good learning for all pupils.
- Teaching does not fully meet the needs of some pupils when tasks are not suitably challenging for the most able or for lower attaining pupils.
- Pupils do not progress well when they spend too long listening to teachers talking, or when teachers involve only very few pupils during whole-class sessions.
- Although senior leaders check teaching regularly, the quality of teaching does not improve rapidly because points for improvement are not always identified sharply enough.
- Teachers in charge of subjects and phases are not sufficiently involved in improving teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- The governing body does not always challenge the school sufficiently to make sure it rapidly improves teaching and pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's leaders have successfully improved teaching and children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception classes.
- Better progress in reading, through teaching pupils in groups according to their attainment, has increased the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those in the special resourced provision, make good progress from their starting points. They benefit from specialist support carefully tailored to their needs.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They have positive attitudes, behave well and are confident and friendly young people.
- The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. They observed 27 teaching sessions, including 13 joint observations with the headteachers.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including assessment data, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school action plan, the self-evaluation report, records of the monitoring of lessons and information relating to teachers' performance management and professional development. The school website and records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspection took account of 75 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View), and the analysis of a survey recently conducted by the school, and spoke to parents informally. Inspectors also took account of 54 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Olson Davis	Additional Inspector
Cliff Mainey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mayplace is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is below average. An average proportion is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There is special resourced provision for up to 16 pupils with autistic spectrum disorder from Nursery to Year 6. Some of these pupils spend time both within the special resourced provision and in main school classes.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families) is below average. There are currently no looked after children or children of service families at the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Nursery classes and two Reception classes. Children in the Nursery attend two-and-a half days each week, either Monday to Wednesday, or Wednesday to Friday.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for children's attainment and progress.
- The school organises and manages breakfast club provision. The after-school club is run by an outside provider and is the subject of separate inspection arrangements.
- The school has two co-headteachers. One is in school from Monday to Wednesday each week and the other is in school from Monday to Friday.
- There have been a high number of changes in teaching staff in recent time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to accelerate pupils' progress, by making sure that teachers:
 - match work closely to the learning needs of individuals
 - plan activities that help all pupils to practise new learning and develop key skills securely, particularly during whole-class teaching.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, including governors, by making sure that:
 - checks on teaching identify sharply the most important aspects that need to be improved
 - leaders in charge of subjects and phases play a full part in checking and improving the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility
 - the governing body develops its skills further to support and hold the school's leaders fully to account for the impact of their work.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6 is not rapid enough. Teaching over time does not make sure that pupils make consistently strong gains in English and mathematics because teachers do not always set work that is suitably challenging for the full range of abilities. Variability in the quality of teaching between classes and the high turnover of teaching staff have also affected the consistency in standards of teaching and rates of progress.
- Compared with pupils nationally, similar proportions of the most able pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Challenging additional sessions for selected pupils in science and mathematics at a local secondary school help the most able pupils to increase their understanding. The most able pupils do not make consistently brisk progress in lessons when they are not set suitably challenging work to do.
- The achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium also shows some variability and this is why it also requires improvement. The pupil premium has funded a variety of extra activities, including small group literacy and numeracy sessions. These have been typically successful in helping eligible pupils catch up with the others.
- In recent years, the gaps between pupils receiving the funding and the others were narrower than those found nationally. In last year's assessments, eligible pupils were less than two terms behind the others in reading and writing and they did as well as the others in mathematics.
- In unconfirmed test results from this summer's national assessments, the gap in attainment between pupils who benefited from the pupil premium and other Year 6 pupils widened and was greater than found nationally. However, the school's information on the progress of pupils currently at the school shows eligible pupils are making similar progress to the others.
- Teaching of early reading and phonics has improved so that, in the most recent Year 1 phonics screening check, considerably more pupils met the expected standard than in the previous year's check. Older pupils have positive attitudes to reading because they read daily in class and appreciate the books available for them to choose in classroom libraries.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those pupils who attend the special resourced provision, is good. Additional guidance for these pupils is closely matched to their needs so that they benefit from a highly personalised programme of support from well-trained staff and professional therapists in the specialist provision, as well as additional guidance in lessons.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because teaching in Nursery and Reception classes is good. They join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally below those expected for their age. They settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception classes and make strong gains to reach average attainment by the end of the Reception year because adults make sure they have interesting activities to do that capture their interest and help them develop key skills quickly.
- Pupils are enthusiastic to join in lunchtime activities organised for each class by recently appointed specialist sports coaches. This is part of the school's drive to use the school sport funding to increase the participation of all pupils in physical activities and promote positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. The additional funding will also be used to train the teachers so that good sports teaching can be sustained.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teachers do not always set work that is the right level of difficulty for the full range of pupils' abilities, particularly in English and mathematics. Lessons in Years 1 to 6 are not always planned carefully enough to make sure tasks are suitably challenging for lower ability pupils and sufficiently demanding for the most able.
- Pupils' progress diminishes when teachers spend too long talking before setting pupils to get on

with independent work. As a consequence they are not able to practise new learning in order to develop confidence in using their skills.

- The pace of pupils' learning also slows when only a very few pupils have the chance to answer questions or contribute answers during teacher-led sessions.
- Teachers have improved the way they mark pupils' work so that they make clear to them what they might do to improve their work further; although, sometimes, wrong spellings of important words are not corrected. Pupils often respond to teachers' comments and feedback. Personal targets help pupils understand what they need to do to move up to the next level in their work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, detailed checks on children's starting points and regular observations of their progress are used carefully to plan the next steps in their learning to extend their knowledge and build on what they have already learned. Children in a Reception class made rapid progress in their knowledge of phonics because the teacher planned fun activities that helped them learn new letter sounds quickly. They listened carefully and were enthusiastic to participate in group activities. The most able children worked hard during independent tasks when the teacher challenged them to write sentences. They confidently remembered to leave finger spaces between the words and put full stops when they had finished.
- During small group and individual sessions, well-trained and dedicated additional adults and specialist teachers support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those in the special resourced provision, very effectively. Routines are particularly well established to guide pupils in the special resourced provision so that their basic skills, including speaking, listening and social development, are well promoted and their self-confidence grows. Some of these pupils also benefit from spending time in lessons in mainstream classes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic to learn and behave well in lessons. They concentrate and listen carefully, even when teachers talk for too long or only a few pupils have opportunities to contribute during whole-class teaching. Sometimes, when independent work is not suitably challenging, their attention wanders but rarely disrupts learning.
- They behave equally well around the school during break times. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that any incidents of bullying are very rare. They say there is very occasionally some name calling, but they are certain that both teaching and additional staff will deal with this effectively, as the school's records show.
- Respectful relationships are promoted strongly so that all pupils get on well together. Pupils are welcoming and friendly; equality is promoted and discrimination tackled effectively so that all pupils, including those in the special resourced provision, are fully included as part of the whole school community.
- Home visits and opportunities for parents to visit the Early Years Foundation Stage help children to settle quickly when they join the school. They were observed working and playing confidently together, sharing resources and taking turns in the inside and outdoor areas. Adults are role models and promote children's personal and social skills strongly.
- A strong emphasis in assemblies on keeping safe from harm, for example when crossing the road, when travelling on public transport and when using computers and other information technology, helps pupils develop a good awareness of risks and how to keep safe. Pupils value the advice and guidance they receive from the pupil-led e-safety committee.
- Despite a range of initiatives to encourage regular attendance, rates of attendance are only average.
- A range of breakfast foods and activities to choose at the breakfast club, as well as welcoming staff, ensures a healthy and calm start to the day for those pupils who attend.

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- Teaching is monitored regularly by the school's senior leaders, but feedback to teachers does not always identify clearly enough what they should do to improve the quality of their teaching to secure rapid progress in pupils' learning and progress.
- Senior leaders have not made sure that leaders of subjects and phases are fully involved in regularly checking the quality of teaching in order to play a strong part in securing rapid improvements to teaching standards in their areas of responsibility and improving achievement for pupils. As a result, the quality of teaching is variable and pupils do not achieve well.
- Staffing issues, including changes in teaching staff, have limited the impact of some of the school's initiatives to improve teaching and, consequently, the quality of pupils' progress is not yet good.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has improved provision and children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. School leaders and governors have ensured that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils in the special resourced provision, are well taught and make good progress. Together with improving pupils' standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check and maintaining pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour, these improvements demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly, for example through thoughtful discussions in assembly and charity fundraising. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop their understanding of the natural world through exploring the school's woodland area. Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic to take on responsibility for growing fruit and vegetables in the school's gardening polytunnel as members of the ground squad.
- The local authority provides valuable support and is working closely with the school to help it to improve quickly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body works supportively with school leaders and staff. Through visits to the school, governors gain a first-hand knowledge of its work and they know what the school does well. They are developing confidence in asking challenging questions, although they could do more to hold the school to account over pupils' achievement to help make sure it improves rapidly. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and support leaders in making a link between teaching quality, pupils' achievement and salary increases through performance management. Governors attend relevant training for their roles and are aware of how the school is performing.

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	101417
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	425523

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	468
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Reilly
Headteacher	Judith Pemberton and Sheena Hamilton
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 February 2013
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