

Kensington Primary School

Kensington Avenue, Manor Park, London, E12 6NN

Inspection dates

26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Achievement over time has been below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, especially in reading and writing.
- Progress across the school has been too slow, especially in reading and writing.
- Not enough pupils, including the most able, attain the higher levels in any subjects at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good across the school.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough; teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently, including the most able, to do their best and do not check often enough during lessons to find out if pupils have understood what they have to do.
- Marking does not ensure that pupils know how to improve their work, so pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Sometimes, pupils do not concentrate well in lessons and too many do not take enough care with how they present or complete their work.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Although leaders check the quality of teaching regularly, they have focused too much on what the teacher does rather than on what the pupils are learning. They do not ensure that best practice is systematically shared across the school.
- Leaders do not formally discuss the progress of pupils with their teachers often enough. Consequently, they have not been quick at correcting underachievement.
- Middle leaders do not have the appropriate time to monitor their areas of responsibility.
- Development plans are too complicated for leaders to track and effectively measure the impact of activities.

The school has the following strengths

- Since September 2013, pupils' progress is accelerating rapidly across the school and attainment is rising because teaching is improving.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception because the teaching is good.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress across the school.
- Pupils are kept safe and are well cared for.
- Attendance is improving.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 21 lessons or parts of lessons, including ones that were focused on the teaching of reading and writing and physical education (PE). Eight of these were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors also made short visits to specific support classes.
- Inspectors talked to pupils, heard them read and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents, including the online Parent View questionnaire. They also talked to several parents before school and considered the views of staff expressed in seven questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority's advisory service and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body. They had discussions with the inclusion manager, Early Years Foundation Stage leader and members of the senior and extended leadership teams, including the literacy and numeracy coordinators, the PE subject leader and support staff.
- Inspectors examined pupils' progress data and other school documentation, including the minutes of governors' meetings, behaviour logs and safeguarding information.
- A formal discussion was held with a group of pupils.

Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jill Thewlis	Additional Inspector
Janet Tomkins	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kensington Primary School is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or come from minority ethnic groups is very high.
- A much higher than usual proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school during the school year.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs are in line with national averages.
- The proportion of children who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools for children in specific groups including those in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- The school has experienced a high level of staff turbulence over the last two years. Since September 2013 nine teachers have joined the school of which six are new to teaching and four are newly qualified teachers. The governing body has been in place since September 2013, replacing a shadow governing body which had replaced an interim executive board.
- The school is currently being supported by a National Leader of Education who is the headteacher of Curwen Primary School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate progress for all, but especially the more able, so that more pupils attain the higher levels by ensuring teachers:
 - set work and activities that make pupils think hard and make the progress of which they are capable
 - have consistently high expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils are required to produce
 - check on pupils' understanding throughout the lesson so that those who are stuck can be helped and those who understand do not waste time going over what they already know
 - indicate clearly in their marking what the pupils need to do to improve and check that pupils do it
 - refer to pupils' literacy targets across all subjects so that opportunities for pupils to read and practise their writing skills are increased.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management to speed up the pace of school improvement by:
 - ensuring that planning is sharply focused on pupils' achievement, with tight deadlines and measurable indicators of success
 - allocating leaders appropriate time to monitor and evaluate actions and demonstrate success
 - ensuring that when evaluating the quality of teaching the focus is as much on what the pupils are learning as on what the teacher is doing and that best practice is systematically shared
 - increasing the opportunities for leaders to discuss pupils' progress formally with teachers and responding promptly and with rigour to any underachievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not yet good because progress has been too slow and standards reached have been too low over time, with not enough pupils, including the most able, attaining the higher levels in any subject.
- Children enter Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age and as a result of good teaching in Nursery and Reception they make good progress. By the end of Reception children are above the national average in all areas of learning.
- Although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average, not enough attain the higher levels in any subject.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading and writing has been low for the last two years and progress from Key Stage 1 has been slow. Attainment in mathematics has improved and is now in line with the national average. As a result of a whole school focus on improving the teaching of mathematics, progress in this subject has been faster than in reading and writing and is now in line with national expectations.
- Although the proportions of pupils that made expected progress in all subjects was below the national average in 2013, these were an improvement on 2012, particularly the proportions that were above the national averages in mathematics and in reading.
- As a result of better teaching, school information indicates that this improving picture is secure, including for those pupils of higher ability and those with English as an additional language.
- As a result of good quality teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) across Nursery, Reception and Year 1, the proportion of pupils reaching the national average in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has been above the national average for the last two years. However, this progress in reading has not been sustained because, by the end of Year 6, the proportion reaching the expected standard has been well below the national average. Current information from the school indicates that, as a result of better teaching and an increased focus on reading, progress has quickened since September 2013. Year 6 pupils are on track to be at least in line with the national average by the end of this academic year.
- Since September 2013, the progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has improved and is now good. Pupils who join the school during the school year and those with English as an additional language are also making good progress. This is because their progress is carefully and regularly checked.
- Not enough able pupils do as well as they should, because teaching does not stretch them.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional resources and support for reading and a school counselling service. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils supported through this funding achieve in line with their peers in school and just below similar pupils nationally. At the end of Key Stage 2 they attain better than similar pupils nationally in mathematics and English, grammar and spelling, but less well in reading and writing. In school, their attainment is six months behind their peers overall, with the largest gap being in writing where they are eight months behind. The gap is closing over time.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not good. Although improving over time, it has been inconsistent and not good enough to enable pupils to make good or better progress. During the inspection some examples of good and outstanding teaching were observed, for example in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 where the teacher provided extra challenge when necessary to secure very good progress.
- Not all teachers set work that ensures all pupils, including the most able, learn well and make good progress. Some pupils are not challenged and find the work too easy. They do not have to

think hard and sometimes do not know how much they are expected to do or have to repeat things that they already understand well. This slows the progress they make.

- Attitudes to learning vary. When lessons are engaging, pupils are keen and avid learners, seen for example where pupils were solving real-life problems, purposefully engaged in designing a theme park. The teacher used every opportunity to check the pupils' learning to resolve any issues so that all pupils, including the more able, made at least good progress.
- Warm relationships between pupils and adults are a feature of most lessons and most pupils work well together. Sometimes, where lessons do not capture pupils' interest fully or where they are not well organised, pupils' attention wanders and behaviour deteriorates.
- The amount of work that pupils complete and its presentation varies between classes and year groups. Often, expectations of what is acceptable are not high enough and, as a result, some written work is too untidy, not completed, or presented with careless spelling and punctuation.
- Teachers do not systematically refer to pupils' literacy and numeracy targets to enable them to apply and improve their skills across subjects, thus missing opportunities to encourage and reinforce pupils' progress in these key skills. The quality of marking is inconsistent. Teachers do not always provide useful comments or give practical advice as to how pupils can improve their work. Pupils are not consistently given time to act upon what the teacher has advised them to do and this restricts their progress.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language receive good support individually, in groups and in class from well-trained staff and specialist teachers. These pupils make similar and sometimes better progress than their peers from their individual starting points, demonstrating the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When closely supervised by adults, pupils generally behave well. However, during break and lunchtimes, in the Key Stage 2 playground, some pupils are not always considerate of others.
- Most pupils have a positive attitude to learning, are keen to learn and behave well where lessons are well planned and capture their interest. However, where lessons do not hold their attention, some pupils become disengaged and distracted. On occasions, when the teacher is asking questions, some pupils shout out their answers rather than wait to be asked, whilst others are easily distracted and lose concentration.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe, know how to stay safe and parents agree. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that there is some bullying and unkindness, sometimes relating to pupils' appearance, but that teachers deal with it quickly. For example, the school council recently told school leaders that some unkind name calling had occurred. The leadership of the school responded immediately through ensuring closer supervision.
- The school works hard to support the small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties and, as a result, exclusions are low. It also uses some of its additional funding for counselling, which is having a positive impact on individual pupils who require extra support.
- All staff and governors are trained in child protection procedures and senior staff and relevant governors have attended appropriate training for recruiting staff.
- Attendance is broadly average and improving as a result of increased efforts by the school. A pre-school football and breakfast club is also helping to improve punctuality.
- Pupils enjoy a range of responsibilities in the school and are keen to take part. For example, they train as peer mediators and have the opportunity to be on the school council. Pupils say that the peer mediators have made a significant difference in helping them resolve any issues that might occur in the playground. Some older pupils are also recruited to act as 'young interpreters' for pupils that enter the school with little or no English.
- Opportunities to work together, specific programmes and assemblies are used appropriately by

the school to promote effectively pupils' social and moral development. Religious education, topics within the school and visits to places of worship and museums promote spiritual and cultural development well. In addition, there are many opportunities for pupils to be involved in music, including learning to play a musical instrument and to sing in a choir.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management are not good because both pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching require improvement.
- The school knows its strengths and weaknesses but has in the past been too generous in its self-evaluation. As a result, governors have not had an accurate picture of pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching.
- The school development plan sets out an agenda for improvement, but leaders and managers do not all have ownership of its content. In addition, actions to bring about improvement do not have clear and measurable success criteria which allow leaders and managers to demonstrate progress or challenge the effectiveness of their actions.
- Senior leaders monitor pupils' progress, but they do not meet often enough with class teachers to identify those pupils who are not making enough progress and to take corrective action. As a result, some groups of pupils have underachieved.
- By contrast, good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have secured good progress. The strengthening of the inclusion team ensures that pupils with a disability and special educational needs now make good progress.
- Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching in the school; although progress has been made recently in improving its quality, there are still pockets of inadequate teaching. Judgements about the quality of teaching have in the past been too generous, focusing more on what the teacher is doing rather than on what pupils are learning.
- Middle leaders are knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility and keen to improve pupils' achievement. However, they do not all have the appropriate time to effectively monitor the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility and, consequently, their impact on pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- Staff are supportive and keen to improve their practice and many have already made an improvement. With the support of the local authority, the school has recently forged links with a local school led by a National Leader of Education. This provides an opportunity for teachers at Kensington to observe and learn from expert teaching. Newly qualified teachers are well supported in school and access training opportunities from the local authority. The management of staff performance and training for teachers and other adults is beginning to raise achievement. There is a clear link between the performance of teachers, salary progression and pupils' progress.
- The school meets the statutory requirements of safeguarding.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and enhanced through a good range of clubs and activities. The school uses the primary school sports funding effectively to employ coaches and provide free additional opportunities for pupils to take part in games and other extra-curricular sporting activities. Early evaluation indicates that there is a positive impact, for example on punctuality and pupils' take up of sport.
- The school is developing its partnerships with local schools positively. It uses external agencies effectively to ensure those pupils who are at risk of not doing as well as they should are supported. There are many opportunities for parents and carers to engage with the school for them to find out more about what their children are learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body was newly formed in September 2013. Governors are ambitious to secure improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement and bring a wide range of skills. Their minutes show that they have an understanding of data and ask searching questions about pupils' achievement and other important issues facing the school.

- They have a rigorous performance management structure in place which is supported by the local authority.
- A few governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, visit the school regularly and there are identified link governors for some aspects of school life, including safeguarding. However, as yet, governors are not sufficiently aware of the daily life of the school.
- Training for safer recruitment and safeguarding has been undertaken and the governing body ensures that the single central record and other aspects of safety are in place.
- Governors know what the pupil premium is used for and check the impact of its use and that of the sports funding.

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	102727
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	440966

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	540
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rashad Qureshi
Headteacher	Mr David Barker
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 November 2011
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