

Bonnygate Primary School

Arisdale Avenue, South Ockendon, RM15 5BA

Inspection dates 28–29 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils do not make enough progress in early Key Stage 2 to eliminate past underachievement, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Achievement in writing is too low by the end of Key Stage 2. Not all teachers give enough guidance and time for pupils to improve their work.
- Teaching is improving rapidly, and much is good, but the quality varies across the school. Consequently, pupils do not yet make enough progress in some subjects.
- The work teachers set does not always challenge pupils to think enough. As a result, some pupils do not work as hard as they should.
- Teachers do not always insist on the highest standards of presentation and handwriting. As a result, there is too much inconsistency in handwriting styles and standards across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a school that is improving rapidly following a dip after the last inspection. Leaders at all levels are committed to raising standards for all pupils.
- Middle leaders are making a positive difference to the achievement of pupils across the school. As a result, the progress of pupils is accelerating.
- School leaders and governors know the school well. They are ambitious and are taking the steps that are needed to improve teaching and learning.
- School leaders have ensured that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils and staff.
- Behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is good. Pupils enjoy being at school, feel safe and are eager to learn.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other and adults so they are happy and confident.
- Leadership and teaching in early years is good. As a result, children make good progress in all areas of their learning in a rich, stimulating environment.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 25 lessons, six of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils, looked at books to take account of the work and progress that pupils make over time.
- The team held meetings with pupils, the substantive headteacher, the interim headteacher, key leaders, three members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and school improvement plan. In addition, the school’s systems for assessing, tracking and evaluating pupils’ progress were examined.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils and arrangements for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs were examined, including a scrutiny of the single central register.
- Inspectors took account of 44 responses from parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire (Parent View), letters, telephone calls and informal conversations on the playground.
- Inspectors analysed 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kim Hall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

Stephen Hall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bonnygate Primary School is a larger-than-average primary school that is growing due to the demand for primary school places in the area.
- Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage but the proportion of minority ethnic pupils, particularly Black African and White European heritage, is increasing.
- The proportion who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- Children in the Nursery attend part-time. Children in the Reception classes attend full time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current national floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The substantive headteacher was appointed in September 2013. Currently, the headteacher is on an extended period of planned absence. Governors have ensured stability by arranging an interim headteacher to support the school leadership and continue school improvement plans.
- The deputy headteacher was internally appointed in September 2014.
- The school has five newly qualified teachers working in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and achievement by:
 - raising the levels of progress for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in lower Key Stage 2
 - teachers having higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - teachers providing work that enables all pupils, whatever their ability, to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - improving the handwriting and presentation in pupils' books by teaching more pupils to write regularly in a joined-up style
 - giving pupils time to respond to the better feedback and guidance they receive from teachers on how to improve their work
 - providing interesting and engaging opportunities for extended writing across other curriculum subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the headteacher arrived at the school, she quickly identified the weaknesses in the achievement of pupils and took swift action to improve teaching. This has resulted in some turbulence in the staffing at the school over the last year. Key leaders, who share the headteacher's vision and passion to succeed, are now in place. They communicate high expectations and ambition for the pupils at the school and, as a result, teaching and achievement are improving. The school is well on its way to becoming a good school.
- All leaders have a thorough and accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has implemented robust systems for checking the performance of teachers. She sets challenging targets, reflecting her ambitions for the pupils, and provides training and support so that teachers can meet these goals.
- Leaders for English and mathematics are ambitious for their subject areas and are becoming increasingly effective in accelerating pupils' progress. Although new to their roles, they have written clear action plans that appropriately address the key priorities of the school. They lead staff training and support newer colleagues well. This is resulting in a 'Bonnygate way' that is clear for new staff to follow.
- The new leader in the early years is providing a very good start to the education of the children. She has organised the curriculum well, trained staff and ensured that there is a continually high quality provision in a warm and stimulating environment. Children are making good progress as a result.
- Middle leaders are working hard at developing the new curriculum across the school, so that pupils can experience inspiring learning opportunities as well as focusing on developing pupils' English and mathematical skills.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has created a calm and welcoming environment in which pupils and staff can thrive. In their questionnaire, staff were overwhelmingly positive about working at the school.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used well. This has resulted in increased levels of participation by pupils in sporting activities in and out of school hours.
- Leaders and managers use pupil premium funding effectively and creatively to enhance the experience of pupils across a range of subject areas. As a result, pupils in receipt of the additional support are achieving broadly in line with their classmates.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils are tolerant and supportive of each other. They are taught to respect the views of those who have different values, beliefs and religions. Through the school's nurturing ethos, pupils are taught a sense of responsibility and respect. Leaders encourage this by choosing one class, on a weekly basis, to care for the school pets. Pupils told inspectors how much they appreciate this.
- School leaders promote British values well. Pupils learn about democracy and the rule of law by participating in decisions about the school, particularly around improving behaviour at playtimes.
- School leaders have ensured that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils and staff. Statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. Effective arrangements are in place and staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk. The single central record is up to date with all necessary checks carried out when recruiting staff. Risk assessments are carried out where necessary for activities in and out of school.
- The local authority has provided effective support to the school by providing training and development for all levels of leadership within the school.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have a clear and accurate view of the school and share the leadership’s ambition for the pupils. They have ensured that, although the substantive headteacher is on arranged leave, school improvement continues. Governors have secured an experienced interim headteacher to continue raising the standard of teaching and pupil outcomes. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils’ progress. They fully understand the requirements to manage teachers’ performance well and, when necessary, ensure that pay increases are based on the progress that pupils make.
- Governors provide appropriate challenge and support of school leaders of all levels. Governors question appropriately the information provided to them from middle leaders so that they can hold them to account for the achievement of all groups of pupils.
- Governors have commissioned external verification of certain aspects of school achievement. One recent report concerns the progress and outcomes for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This has resulted in a focus on the provision for this group of pupils and achievement is accelerating.
- All the statutory duties of the governing body are fulfilled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Older pupils commented on how much behaviour has improved over the last year due to the positive awards and recognition given by the headteacher and other adults. They particularly enjoy earning the responsibility of looking after the school pets.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered, respectful and have good relationships with each other and adults. As a result, pupils are confident and conduct themselves well as they move around the school. They wear their Bonnygate uniform well.
- Pupils enjoy school. They settle quickly to learning at the start of the school day. Although attendance is lower than average, adults in the school know this and give weekly attendance awards. This has resulted in attendance improving.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They listen well and participate fully in lessons even where the activities are not interesting or challenging enough, or the expectations from teachers are unclear. Consequently, lessons proceed without interruption to the learning.
- The school is set in extensive grounds. Pupils are able to enjoy the space available and choose their own games, sit quietly or play on school apparatus. They are supported appropriately by a number of adults. As a result, serious incidents of poor behaviour recorded are rare. Where there are any incidents of name-calling, pupils are confident that adults will take action. The vast majority of parents agree that their children are happy and safe at school.
- In assemblies, pupils learn about tolerance, respect and how to secure positive relationships with each other. Adults give pupils opportunity for personal reflection regularly during assemblies; pupils respond appropriately and with consideration.

Safety

- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff receive regular and effective training so that all statutory procedures and processes are fully in place. This is a strength of the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They look after each other. Those pupils spoken to during the inspection could explain how to use the internet safely and appropriately for their age. This is because teachers provide regular advice on this matter.

- The vast majority of parents agreed that their children are happy at school and feel safe. Most parents agreed that their children are well looked after while at school. Pupils understand the different types of bullying and can clearly identify a person that they can inform.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Leaders have a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning over time and much is now good. However, teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve as they move up through the school. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The quality and quantity of work in pupils' books shows inconsistent progress. In some classes teachers accept poorly presented work and handwriting that is poorly formed or not joined. In contrast, in other classes pupils' books are of a high quality and well presented demonstrating ability, pride and consistently high expectation from teachers.
- Not all teachers encourage and develop reading skills well enough, particularly for weaker readers who are boys. Consequently, some boys do not develop fluency and a deeper understanding of the meaning of texts as they move through the school. Too much is then expected of pupils to achieve in Year 6.
- Books are regularly marked and in line with the school's policy. Not all teachers give dedicated time for pupils to respond to the feedback and guidance so pupils do not have enough opportunity to improve their work.
- In the best mathematics lessons, teachers encourage the use of precise mathematical vocabulary and reasoning with number. Pupils respond well to this level of challenge. However, teachers do not expect or give the same amount of challenge in every year group. This results in inconsistent progress across the school in mathematics.
- Some of the additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant has been used to provide additional teaching support for older pupils in mathematics. The use of this funding has been effective. The school's own records show that progress in mathematics is improving for these pupils.
- In Years 1 and 2, teachers make good use of information about pupils' progress to plan tasks of an appropriate level of difficulty for groups of learners in the class. Pupils work to share and develop their ideas and to rehearse answers. But this is not consistent across the school where work is not always set at the right level and does not always build on what pupils actually know.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and contribute well to pupils' progress, especially in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the quality of teaching in the school. Their contribution makes sure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs focus on the teacher's input and complete work as best they can. The inclusion manager organises small group and one-to-one sessions that have resulted in pupils making progress in their learning at the same rate as their classmates.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although there are many signs that pupils' English and mathematics skills are improving in the school, these are not developing rapidly enough across all year groups. Too much is expected of their progress in Year 6. Although pupils make rapid and accelerated progress in this year, they have to make up for lost ground in previous years. As a result, for too many pupils, their skills in writing are well below average when compared with other pupils nationally.
- Variability in the quality of teaching now and in the past accounts for the slower progress made by some pupils across the school, particularly for the less and more able. Where teaching is stronger or they receive organised interventions, these pupils are now making good progress.

- Children make good progress in the early years from low starting points. The children are on track to make even better progress than last year. The majority of children are achieving a good level of development that is above national expectation for children of their age and ensures their readiness to start Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics (sounds that letters make) well to help them decode words. The teaching of phonics has improved and developed. Pupils are taught in smaller targeted groups resulting in more pupils that are on track to achieve the required level in the Year 1 check. There is a variation in the standard of reading for the older boys and girls. Teachers do not always ensure that all pupils understand the texts or read with fluency.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making the same rates of progress as their peers. This is because the new inclusion manager has ensured training for support staff and a programme of additional intervention that closely matches the needs of the pupils.
- Currently pupils in Year 6 who are eligible for pupil premium funding are a term behind their peers in writing and in line with their peers in reading and mathematics. This indicates good progress for this large group of pupils. Last year, pupils eligible for the pupil premium left the school making more progress in reading, writing and mathematics than their peers in the school and others nationally. This shows that the school is using pupil premium funding well.

The early years provision

is good

- Children have a good start to their education. From low starting points, pupils quickly make and sustain good progress. This is because adults give a clear and consistent approach, providing exciting opportunities throughout the day. As a result children are happy, confident and eager to learn.
- The new leader in the early years is making rapid improvements. She sets high expectations of children and adults with great enthusiasm. As a result, she is creating a rich and stimulating environment where children can learn.
- Adults are well organised and planned. They use effective questioning skills to encourage children to share their ideas, using appropriate vocabulary. As a result, children develop their language skills well. Children make rapid gains in acquiring reading skills. This is because children receive quality teaching in small groups where their needs can be more appropriately met. In these lessons, children also have the opportunity to develop their writing skills. They tackle these times with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. As a result children are also making rapid progress in writing.
- The children's books show that they are making sustained progress over the school year. But for some more-able children there is not enough targeted opportunity for them to extend their skills so they can exceed expectations.
- In the Nursery provision, adults provide a safe, purposeful and well-organised environment. They support and encourage children to develop good relationships and work well together. From the range of evidence in the books and on display, children are given many opportunities for choosing their own activities.

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	114968
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	461663

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 local authority
Chair	Debbie Lawson
Headteacher	Sarah McHugh
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2011
Telephone number	01708 853316
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