

Vicarage Primary School

Vicarage Lane, Newham, London, E6 6AD

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders and managers work effectively to ensure that the school community is cohesive.
- Senior leaders make sure that classroom tasks are well organised and that they contribute strongly to the development of all pupils.
- Good teaching leads to pupils gaining a secure knowledge in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who receive additional funding achieve extremely well in mathematics. Overall, they make good progress in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve exceptionally well because of their positive experiences in the classroom and with outdoor learning opportunities.
- Attainment is high in mathematics, but similar to the expected standards in reading. Writing is below national expectations compared to similar schools, but is improving rapidly.
- Gaps in achievement between groups of pupils are closing in English. There are no gaps in mathematics.
- As a result of high-quality teaching and stimulating activities in the early years, these children make outstanding progress.
- The behaviour of pupils across the school is excellent. They show respect to each other, their teachers and visitors. Pupils say they feel extremely safe and happy.
- Pupils like to get involved in their lessons. They have an exceptional understanding of how well they are doing and are eager to build on their progress.
- Parents work closely with the school and regularly take part in workshops and contribute their views. They are happy with pupils' behaviour and the rate of progress their children make.
- Pupils' experience of school is very rich and inspiring because of the wide range of subjects pupils study. As a result, they have a deep understanding of the world they live in.
- The strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to appreciation of diversity and tolerance within the school and among the local community.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths. They use their expertise well to challenge and support senior leaders and to ensure pupils and staff feel safe and secure.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils attain below national expectations for writing.
- The most able pupils have not yet reached their potential in higher-level writing skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 56 parts of lessons that differed in length. Members of the leadership team took part in joint visits to lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes were observed in lessons, assemblies, playtimes, when pupils moved around the school and during lunchtime.
- Pupils from different age groups spoke to inspectors about their perceptions of the school. Some pupils from Years 2 to 5 read to inspectors. Pupils' previous work in literacy and mathematics was scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, which provides evidence of the opinions of parents. Inspectors also took account of a range of comments from parent surveys carried out by the school, and spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Documents reviewed include the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement plan, arrangements for safeguarding, and records of observations of teaching, pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. In addition, notes of governors' meetings, the school policies for behaviour management, and programmes of support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs were considered.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Sutherland-Harper

Additional Inspector

Jan Gough

Additional Inspector

Linda Harvey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is 16.8%, which is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is higher than that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African heritages.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high compared to the national average.
- The school is part of a teaching alliance within the local authority. It hosts training for teachers as well as organising conferences.
- Children in the Nursery attend part time and Reception children attend full time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment in writing by ensuring that teaching maximises progress for pupils in their writing skills, and enables the most able to reach their potential in higher-level writing.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers make sure the school is a happy, safe and vibrant place, where pupils enjoy learning and are well prepared to develop into successful citizens. Senior leaders plan and carry out regular checks to ensure that good-quality teaching enables all pupils to make good progress from their starting points.
- Middle leaders work collaboratively to ensure that the learning and progress of all pupils are central to their work. Planning for improvement is meticulous and synchronised well to the particular needs of pupils.
- Leaders, managers and governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. Teachers and their assistants are provided with ongoing training and support that help them develop effective teaching skills. Currently, there is a focus on improving higher-level writing skills; however, the full impact has not yet taken place and, consequently, not all pupils are yet making sufficient progress in writing.
- Leaders and managers are rigorous in making sure that teaching is directed at deepening pupils' knowledge. Many subjects have an international dimension, but also have a focus on British culture and values. Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well because they gain a broad understanding of the modern world. Pupils refine their literacy and numeracy skills through well-planned topics and imaginative opportunities. For example, an art project to build a Viking ship utilised the pupils' knowledge of what pupils have read about Viking history.
- The school uses its additional sport funding extremely well, and participation has improved as a result. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of sports such as gymnastics, athletics, handball, cricket and basketball. The school regularly evaluates the impact of sports and clubs, ensuring that they help pupils to improve their skills and understanding of particular sporting activities. This also develops their ability to work exceptionally well as team members. Pupils have a better understanding of healthy living, and their self-esteem and confidence make them more aspirational about their learning.
- Other additional funding is allocated effectively to provide specialist teachers and programmes for pupils. Specialist sporting, musical and drama clubs also encourage pupils to further develop their skills and improve their confidence.
- The school's practice in embedding all elements of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning across the school is excellent. Pupils have a strong understanding of tolerance and diversity. They are knowledgeable about other religions and they also study Spanish and French. They are adept at being reflective, diverse and respectful. An example of this was seen in a Year 2 class assembly when pupils demonstrated a range of social skills as they shared their opinions and reflected on Remembrance Day.
- Displays around the school are vibrant and reinforce history, literature, art and cultural education. Pupils write poems to enter competitions and capture important points of history through drawings and paintings. As well as having artistic talents, pupils also develop their skills by singing and playing musical instruments.
- The school works well with the wider community. As part of the local authority's teaching alliance, the school takes part in organising conferences. It also supports other schools in areas such as assessment and teaching disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Safeguarding practices are effective throughout the school. Leaders and managers ensure that there is excellent understanding of keeping pupils safe.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school, acting as a critical friend in order to sustain the school's strength within the community.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body works closely with the headteacher and her staff, and ensures that the governing body has a clear understanding of setting targets for teachers. Governors are linked to departments in the school and visit regularly. They speak to pupils and receive regular updates from staff and senior leaders. Governors hold the school to account for the performance of both staff and pupils in terms of teaching quality and achievement. They have a good understanding of information on pupil progress and use this to check that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and are supported with additional funding, are making good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and activities around the school is excellent. Pupils listen intently in lessons and are always keen to answer questions. They are confident and very polite towards each other, their teachers and visitors.
- Around the school and at break times and lunchtimes, pupils walk quietly and sensibly along corridors. They eat sociably together in the hall. There is no litter, graffiti or bad language because pupils respect their school and its high expectations for impeccable behaviour.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride and ensure that their classrooms and books are kept neat and well presented. They are able to talk confidently about the next steps towards their progress goals. These very positive attitudes to learning enable them to make rapid progress, sometimes reaching standards that are much higher than those expected,

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils have a strong understanding of different types of bullying and are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe when using computers and the internet. They know how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Evidence from the school's records and discussions with pupils confirm that racism and homophobic name calling do not occur. Pupils have a high level of respect for each other's different faiths and cultures. All pupils regularly celebrate the importance of anti-bullying and collectively sign an agreement to maintain their loyalty to each other. Pupils talked about this with pride.
- Parents, staff and pupils all agree that the school keeps pupils safe and happy.
- Attendance is consistently above average and records show that pupils are always punctual.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching of all subjects is good. Teachers and their assistants are committed to making sure that every pupil makes good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils deepen their knowledge of a wide range of subjects which they find fun and interesting. For example, pupils are excited to learn about the Tudors and Shakespeare through drama and school trips. Pupils who took the inspector on a tour around the school were particularly proud of the work they had done on famous Black writers and scientists.
- All staff collaborate in ensuring that every pupil's specific targets are clear and built on, using a range of activities to improve pupils' higher-level writing skills.
- The teaching of reading, writing, and communication is good. Children have positive attitudes towards reading and writing because their learning experiences are memorable. For example, pupils found the topic of pirates exciting, became very engaged and were keen to consolidate their literacy skills as a result.
- The teaching of mathematics is excellent. Pupils are very excited about the challenges set by their teachers and the awarding of achievement badges and certificates when they consolidate their mathematics knowledge.
- Marking in books provides clarity for pupils about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. However, marking sometimes fails to provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils, particularly to develop their higher-level writing skills.
- From their early stages of learning, pupils are encouraged to present their work well and take pride in what they do. They respond well to comments in their books, and in lessons they are encouraged to check each other's work and feed back to each other. Pupils said that the marking 'helps them not to make the same mistake'.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because, from their starting points, most pupils make at least good progress in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics, and some make outstanding progress.
- Pupils attain higher levels than their peers nationally in mathematics. They are working broadly in line with national levels in reading, but are below national expectations in writing.
- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils exceeding expected progress in mathematics are high compared with national figures. In reading and writing the proportions exceeding expected progress are low compared with national figures but are rapidly improving.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the

achievement gap is closing fast and disadvantaged pupils perform well, similar to their peers in school and nationally. These pupils perform better than their peers nationally in mathematics, and as a result of specific activities that have recently been introduced, in Year 5. They are one term ahead of their peers in English and mathematics.

- Pupils of all ages and abilities enjoy reading and read fluently. All classrooms have a wide range of books, and younger children confidently use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read words and short sentences.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and develop their mathematical skills extremely well as a result of being constantly challenged. Effective questioning techniques and competitions encourage fast thinking and keep pupils interested. The high level of enthusiasm this generates was demonstrated by a Year 4 pupil approaching an inspector with a staff member to talk about his success in getting his badges for explaining challenging calculations.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stages in their education because the school provides all pupils with time to familiarise and feel comfortable with the next setting they will move to. Pupils are provided with opportunities to take responsibility around the school, and are keen to help each other. They are keen to volunteer to help their peers with learning in their lessons.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. Those from different ethnic groups achieve equally well. This is because the school is fully committed to equality of opportunity and ensures that each individual pupil's achievement is checked regularly and closely.
- The most able pupils make high levels of progress in mathematics and are working, on average, at a 13% higher level than their peers nationally. In English they are working below national expectations of their ability, although currently making rapid improvement in this area.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported extremely well. As a result, they make outstanding progress in all areas of their learning from their starting points.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. The leader for early years empowers her team to work successfully and enables all children to grow and become happy and able ones.
- Children make excellent progress from their very low starting points. Results from the recent check on their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) show that all pupils, including those supported through additional funding, attain high levels in this aspect of learning.
- Children start Nursery with skills that are well below levels typical for their age. All children are assessed early on arrival to provide them with the most suitable guidance for learning. Children develop their skills rapidly because they are surrounded by caring adults who challenge and interest them in their learning environment. As a result, children interact well with visitors, each other and their teachers. By the time they reach the end of Reception, they are extremely well prepared for Year 1.
- Teachers and their assistants have an excellent understanding of all the children's abilities because they assess the children's exact needs regularly.
- Adults set high expectations and quickly establish solid learning routines. As a result, children learn rapidly and by the end of the Reception Year the proportion meeting expected levels is above average. This proportion include disadvantaged children, those who speak English as an additional language, disabled children and those who have special educational needs.
- Children are confident in making choices and enjoy learning through a wide range of activities that stimulate their imagination. For example, children were engrossed in role play where they were buying groceries to cook a meal.
- The indoor and outdoor areas in which children learn and play are clean, vibrant and extremely engaging. As a result, children are happy, comfortable and extremely well behaved. They are kind to each other and respond well to teachers, helpers and visitors.
- Parents speak fondly of the early years setting. They are very happy with the way the school cares for their children and believe that their children are happy. The school successfully engages parents through a variety of workshops and open days to learn about how best they can support their children at home.

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	102762
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	449364

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	878
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Quintin Peppiatt
Headteacher	Yvonne Ward
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 September 2010
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