

Gallions Mount Primary School

Purrett Road, Plumstead, London, SE18 1JR

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Over the past two years pupils have made consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in both key stages.
- Attainment is broadly average at both key stages, though it is a little lower in mathematics at the end of Year 6 than in reading and writing. The most able pupils attained the higher Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and are well prepared for the move to Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is mostly good and some of it is outstanding. It is well pitched to the needs of individual pupils who are trained to develop independent thinking skills.
- Potentially vulnerable pupils are well provided for and receive very effective support.
- Senior and middle leaders, governors and staff make rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and on pupils' progress with a critical eye towards improvement. This contributes to maintaining the good quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are very supportive of the senior leaders in all they do to provide good education. They care deeply about the children in this school, no matter what their home circumstances or backgrounds might be.
- Behaviour is good in and around the school. Pupils are at ease with themselves and this is reflected in the way they quietly get on with learning tasks as if they were the most natural thing to do, with no fuss.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Although pupils get clear feedback and information on how to improve their learning in English, the same is not happening in mathematics.
- In mathematics, the youngest pupils, the disabled and those with special educational needs are not always provided with practical resources that would help them solve problems more easily.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, three of which were carried out jointly with the headteacher. They also carried out an extensive scrutiny of pupils' workbooks jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the senior management team, with a number of subject and other leaders, with teachers and teaching assistants, with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to pupils, parents and carers to see how they feel about the school in general. They also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at the relevant documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan and policies regarding behaviour and attendance and the safeguarding of all pupils.
- Inspectors examined the most recent government data on the attainment of pupils in the school and the school systems for checking on pupils' progress through the school year.
- In addition, inspectors took account of the responses from 11 parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Responses from 37 members of staff to the staff questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Mina Drever, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Vicky Turner	Additional Inspector
John Mason	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average size primary school, with three quarters of the pupils representing many different ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Black African.
- Half of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of additional funding (the pupil premium) is greater than the national average. In this school the grant is provided for those pupils eligible for free school meals, for service children and for looked after children. More than half of the pupils in Year 6 are in receipt of this funding.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs at school action is above the national average. The proportions of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are much larger than the national average.
- Mobility is much greater than the national average. Over the last three years new pupils have entered the school during Year 5 and Year 6. Some have come to this school from within the borough but most of these late entries arrive from abroad having had a very different education.
- Children enter the school either in Nursery at age three or in Reception at age four, some with little or no English on arrival.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a partner in a cluster of nine schools, eight primaries and one secondary.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:
 - providing more practical activities and resources for the youngest pupils and those who are disabled and with special educational needs to explore concepts and solve problems in mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils know how to improve their learning in mathematics by establishing a clear teacher-pupil dialogue when marking pupils' work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well from their different starting points. Children enter the Early Years Foundations Stage well below the stages of development expected for their age. Many arrive with little or no English. They make good progress and are well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1. Progress improved over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013 the results of the Year 1 phonics screening check (understanding the sounds that letters make in English) were well above the national average. Attainment rose in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress at Key Stage 2 has remained consistently good over the last two years. Attainment in 2013 was average, with a drop in mathematics. The most able pupils performed well in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test, and some reached Level 6 in mathematics.
- Some of the pupils who arrive midway through their primary school career come from very different educational backgrounds or with no records of their previous achievement. They receive intensive support to enable them to catch up, although their attainment by the end of Year 6 is typically lower than that of their peers.
- Pupils' workbooks show that they make rapid progress over very short period of times. For example, Year 4 pupils' books showed progress in writing from constructing simple sentences at the start of September to using more complex features of writing in November.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress as a result of very carefully identified interventions. All these pupils have individual educational plans. Highly trained assistants provide very sensitive support. Many of these children come to this school with profound emotional needs. They find caring staff who give every child opportunities to reach his or her potential.
- Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2012 and the provisional results for 2013 show that pupils eligible for the pupil premium who have had the majority of their education at Gallions Mount reach similar levels of attainment to other pupils in the school. The small proportion who arrive during Years 5 and 6 do not always do as well as their peers.
- Achievement is not outstanding because pupils do not make the same rate of progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing. They do not receive the same high-quality written feedback in their workbooks as they do in writing so that they know exactly what they need to do to improve their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is well structured and well pitched to the learning needs of different ability groups and individuals, with high expectations and high levels of challenge. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons, including those in receipt of the pupil premium, the disabled and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils' workbooks are regularly marked. They receive clear written feedback on how they can improve their work in writing. This clear feedback is missing in mathematics books. However, all work, in English and in mathematics, is very well presented and pupils are very proud of this. In addition, pupils read widely and well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants pass on great enthusiasm for learning. They use questioning techniques that foster independent thinking.
- Teachers monitor learning regularly during the lessons. They ask pupils to tell their peers what they think they have done well or what they have not done so well and explain why. Pupils are used to this routine, which is very sensitively done, and they are proud to explain how they think they are doing.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The outdoor environment is excellent and it is organised well so as to provide plenty of opportunities for good progress in all areas of development, including physical development, language, number awareness and social skills.
- Literacy is well taught, including phonics. There is a strong emphasis on good quality writing and mistakes are routinely corrected so that pupils make good progress in spelling and in using other conventions for writing. High standards of writing are expected in English and in all other areas of learning.
- Teaching is not outstanding because the teaching of mathematical concepts to the younger pupils and those with special educational needs is not sufficiently practical and as a result they find it harder to understand and learning slows. Pupils have too few opportunities to carry out investigations and solve problems by using tactile materials such as building blocks and coins. In addition, pupils do not receive clear written feedback in mathematics on how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the school and at break times is orderly, reflecting good development of social skills. Pupils at all times are at ease with themselves, with other pupils and with all adults. They conduct themselves responsibly and are always courteous.
- Lessons are rarely disrupted because teachers manage learning behaviour very effectively. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy their work and collaborate well together in group tasks. They respond well to adults' guidance and as a result they gain in confidence and strive to do well, whatever their starting points.
- Pupils are punctual to lessons and rarely late to school. Attendance improved to above average in 2012 and is currently average. Fixed-term exclusions are rare, used very occasionally only to reinforce the code of conduct and the school's golden rules of behaviour.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe and their parents and carers agree that their children are safe. They understand different types of bullying and they say that instances of bullying are rare. Occasional incidents are well managed by all staff.
- The school provides a safe haven called 'The Place to Be' for potentially vulnerable pupils and those in need of emotional support and counselling. Through talk therapy, well-trained adults help pupils to gain confidence and a sense of self-worth, which has a positive impact on their progress. A family support worker liaises with families promptly as the need arises to help them support their children's education. These areas are particular strengths of the school.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because in some mathematics lessons younger pupils and those with special educational needs do not grasp basic concepts when they are presented in ways which are too abstract and not sufficiently practical. As a result of this, pupils lose concentration

and make slower progress than they should.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have rigorous systems in place for monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, including lesson observations which identify areas for individual teachers' professional development. This has played a key role in the improved quality of teaching.
- Leaders have good systems for identifying and responding to the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They take great care to meet the needs of each child, no matter what that need might be. As a result these pupils make good progress. For example, pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 moved up at least one National Curriculum level in reading in 2013, which represents very good progress.
- Governors, senior and middle leaders and all staff care deeply for each and every child. They set ambitious goals for the school as a whole and for individual pupils. This helps all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is supported well by the rich topic-based curriculum. This is celebrated in the class assemblies, attended by parents and carers, where pupils show artwork and sing songs related to a particular topic. For example, Year 1 pupils presented activities in their search of '10 things to make the world a safer environment', which included taking the bus to listen to the London Philharmonic Orchestra, drawing the instruments they were playing and then categorising them into string and percussion families of instruments. Pupils get involved in local charitable events and visit other places of worship in their study of other religions.
- Provision is good for pupils who speak English as an additional language. After an initial assessment of English on arrival they are given appropriate language support in all subjects, as a result of which they make good progress, in line with other pupils in school.
- The school spends the pupil premium funding well by providing appropriate programmes to accelerate progress, such as literacy support, dyslexia packs which help dyslexic pupils to read and spell well, counselling, transport costs to visits and the training of teaching assistants in speech and language support.
- The spending of new government funding for developing physical education is at an early stage. Leaders are working with partner schools to provide competitive sports and meet transport costs for inter-school sports events. A number of sports clubs are in place in school which have a good impact on developing healthy lifestyles. Dancing and movement lessons are well established.
- The school has built very good relationships with families. Parents and carers are very supportive and they attend their children's class assemblies with pride and high expectations. In conversation, they praised the approachability of staff, the quality of teaching and the progress their children make.
- The school meets the statutory safeguarding requirements.
- The local authority has worked well with the school on a 'light touch' basis for a number of years.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective in ensuring high quality of education for the pupils in this school, for whom they care deeply. They have received the necessary training to know how to challenge the school about pupils' achievement, in particular that of those pupils in receipt of the pupil premium, the disabled and those with special educational needs. They scrutinise achievement data to good effect. They hold the school to account through its subcommittees and through the performance management of the headteacher. They monitor and ratify policies and the performance management targets of teachers. They participate in the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. They monitor the budget carefully and make sure that the pupil premium funding is spent appropriately.

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	100126
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	425593

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	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Hubert Enright
Headteacher	Mr Doug Johnston
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 October 2008
Telephone number	020 8854 2691
Fax number	020 8854 7134
Email address	head@gallions.net

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