

St Margaret's C of E VA Primary School

15-19 North Street, Barking, IG11 8AS

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes because teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils make good progress over time and there is a trend of rising standards throughout the school.
- A focus on improving writing has caused standards to rise rapidly.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and they behave well. They feel safe at school.
- Good teaching means that all groups of pupils make good progress, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The newly formed headship team, supported well by the governing body, has brought about swift improvement in teaching and introduced very thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, work is not set at the right level for some pupils.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems.
- Not enough marking and target setting match the best examples in the school.
- In some classes pupils do not write at length in different subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 31 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspection team heard pupils read, attended two assemblies and, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random and with members of the school council and eco-committee. Discussions were held with the headship team, phase leaders, subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of the 14 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with several parents outside school.
- The inspectors considered 46 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephanie Rogers	Additional Inspector
Jeanie Underwood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from Black African backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high, and increasing.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services) is below average. The school has no looked after children or pupils with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery with 52 part-time places and a Reception Unit that contains two class bases and many shared areas.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for progress and standards in English and mathematics.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club, known as Smarties.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding by:
 - always setting work at the right level for all groups of pupils
 - extending the best practice in marking and target setting to all classes
 - agreeing what makes outstanding teaching and consistently implementing it.
- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems
 - making sure all teachers encourage pupils to write at length in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's information about pupils' progress shows that most pupils made good progress last year and this positive rate of progress is continuing this year. Attainment is at least in line with expectations in all year groups and there is a trend of rising standards.
- In Year 6 national tests in 2012, standards were above average in English, reflecting the whole-school focus on improving writing.
- The school identified that standards were not as strong in mathematics in 2012 because pupils did not have enough experience of using and applying their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems. This is a focus for improvement this year.
- Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are low, particularly in their personal and social development. They make good progress, but do not all move up to the school's Reception classes, because these are so over subscribed.
- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage because activities are tailored to their needs and they find them interesting and enjoyable. Girls and boys are inspired to take opportunities to develop their early reading, writing and mathematical skills well.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics (the sounds that letters make) and Year 1 pupils score above the national average. Pupils have a good grounding in learning to read unfamiliar words and tackling new texts.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is consistently good across the school. This is because they are supported well by capable teaching assistants who have been trained well and briefed well about pupils' needs.
- The increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because teachers adapt learning to suit them and many of the staff speak their languages and dialects.
- The pupil premium is spent effectively on additional teaching support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and in subsidising visits and clubs so that they can have full access to all that the school offers. These pupils make good progress.
- In 2012, pupils eligible for free school meals reached higher standards than their peers nationally in English and similar standards in mathematics. They are slightly behind other pupils in the school in English, but more so in mathematics. Measures the school has introduced to improve mathematics are closing that gap this year.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers question pupils well to assess their level of understanding and to extend their thinking. Good questioning caused Year 6 pupils to consider in depth what to do if confronted out in the street.
- There are good relationships in classes between pupils and with adults, and learning is purposeful and clearly focused. Pupils know what they are learning and how they can succeed. Teachers use teaching assistants well to support individuals and groups, so that they make good progress.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, children explore a good range of activities, both inside and in the shared area outside, which helps to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills. For example, children enjoyed counting numbers attached to ducks in the water tray.
- Pupils make good use of computers and other electronic devices to enhance their learning. For example, Year 1 pupils were building their own imaginary city on laptops.
- Reading is taught well across the school. The new library is centrally located and makes books accessible and attractive to pupils. Pupils read at length and are encouraged to try a wide range of different authors.
- Work in books shows that good teaching enables pupils to progress well over time. There is a

quantity of good quality writing in English books. However, this does not extend to other subjects, such as history and science, where pupils do not do enough writing in some classes.

- There are some outstanding examples of marking which engage pupils in dialogue about learning and clear targets that help them move to the next level of attainment. However, this excellent practice is not consistent across classes. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's 'learning journeys' give a comprehensive account of their progress, with useful photographs and notes about their learning, including what their next steps should be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have an enthusiasm for learning and their behaviour is consistently good in class and around the school. Parents agree that behaviour is good. Just occasionally, if work is not set at the right level, some pupils become restless.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying, such as racist bullying and cyber bullying, but say that this is not a problem in their school. They are confident that if they have any concerns they will be sorted out promptly by the adults.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school, a view shared by parents. They understand how to keep safe in a variety of situations.
- Their faith is important to them and they make use of the school's prayer room on a regular basis. One pupil described it as 'a school of prayer'. Another said, 'Whenever we pray to Jesus we end up winning!' Pupils put their Christian values into practice in the caring way they treat one another and in the respect they show adults and visitors.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, for example as prefects helping out with assemblies and playtime routines. The school council administers its own budget and has been influential in improving the school's grounds. The eco-committee makes sure the school is ecologically aware and keeps an eye on conserving energy and recycling. It also sponsors a goat in Kenya.
- Attendance is consistently high, reflecting pupils' great enjoyment of school. The pupils are punctual to lessons and very proud of their school.

The leadership and management are good

- The newly formed headship team has increased the school's leadership capacity, especially to improve teaching. Both the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher work closely alongside colleagues to demonstrate best practice and give support.
- Staff have agreed characteristics of effective lessons but are not so confident about what makes teaching outstanding. Leaders have a priority to make sure all teachers know and implement the features of the most effective teaching.
- The school has very thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress, which mean that anybody at risk of falling behind is identified quickly and helped to catch up. Frequent meetings to consider the progress of pupils with class teachers hold staff to account and check how well pupils are doing.
- Leaders check carefully the impact of support so that it makes a difference to pupils. An example of this is the good progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Enthusiastic and energetic subject leaders have, in a relatively short time, gained a good grasp of teaching and standards in their areas of responsibility. They meet regularly to swap ideas and share best practice.
- Teachers in charge of subjects or phases are held accountable for the efficient use of their time and report to the headship team on the influence they are having. This means that leaders have a very good understanding of how well key priorities for improvement are being implemented and the difference they are making.
- Regular checking of the quality of teaching and the wider work of the school by leaders at all levels give a clear indication of its strengths and areas for development. Staff are given helpful

feedback about their practice and robust targets to improve their teaching. Performance is managed rigorously.

- The curriculum has strengths, but is not approached consistently. There are some good examples of links across subjects in Years 3 and 4, but this is not the case across the school. In some classes pupils do not write enough outside their English lessons.
- All Year 5 pupils benefit from violin lessons. The school excels at sports and learning is enhanced through a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs. Singing is a particular strength. The school's gospel choir sings with passion and energy.
- The Smarties before- and after-school club is run well and makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development, with pupils of all different ages mixing harmoniously together.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well through assemblies and lessons which give pupils the opportunity to reflect upon life and the world around them. A special 'exploring Africa' week gave pupils a taste of the richness of music, dance and culture from that continent.
- The school makes sure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. It fosters good relations with parents and runs workshops to help them support their children at home. All those who responded to Parent View said that their children are happy at school.
- The school has received good support from the local authority and the diocese in validating the school's judgements and improving teaching. An external consultant has also made a positive contribution to developing the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils, and how this compares with all schools nationally. Governors are involved in setting targets for the headteacher and other teachers and know how the school rewards good teaching and what it is doing to tackle any underperformance. They keep a close eye on the finances and know how the pupil premium is being spent and the difference it is making to eligible pupils' progress. Through regular 'away days', governors increase their knowledge of the school and focus on aspects of its work, such as its self-evaluation. They have sharpened the role of link governors. The Chair makes sure that the many new governors are shown the ropes quickly so that they can make a positive contribution to the governing body's work. Governors make sure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and keep pupils safe.

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	101233
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	400463

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	458
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anita Fenn
Headteacher	Ruth Ejvet
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 January 2010
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